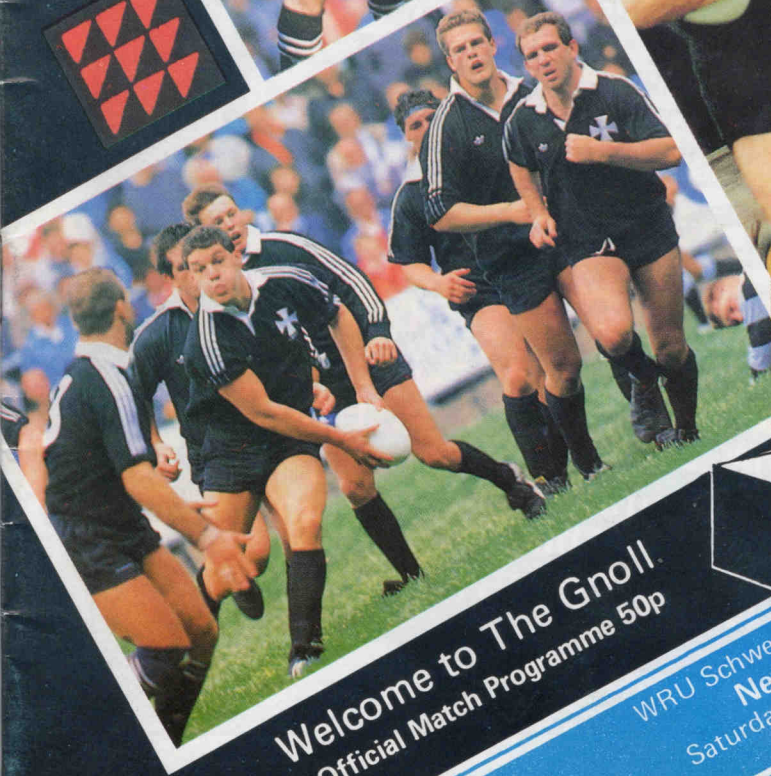
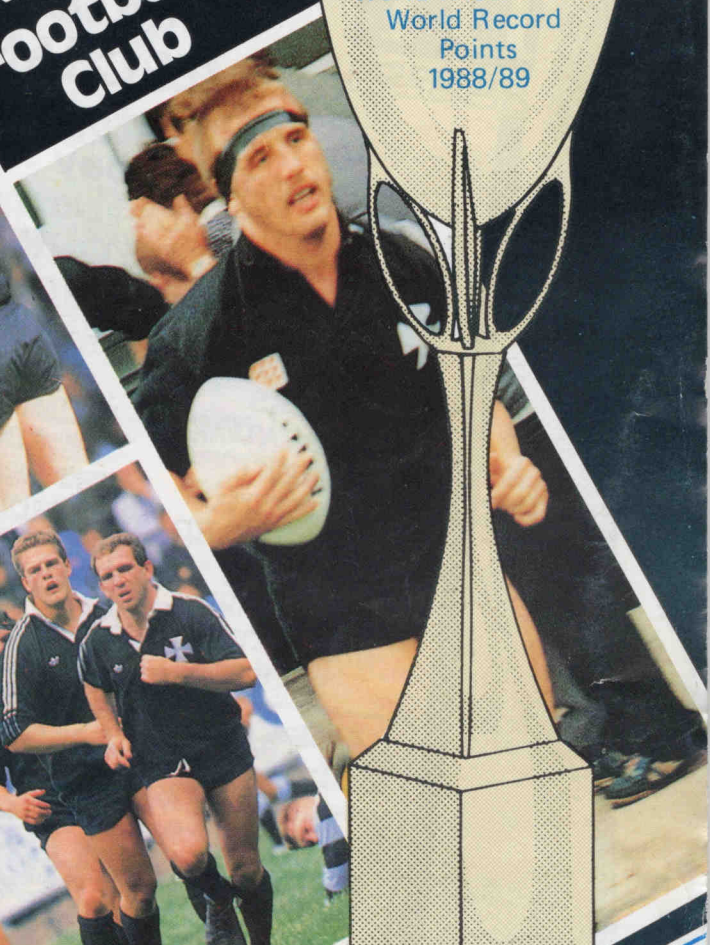
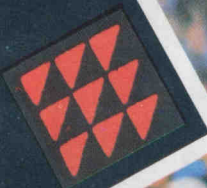


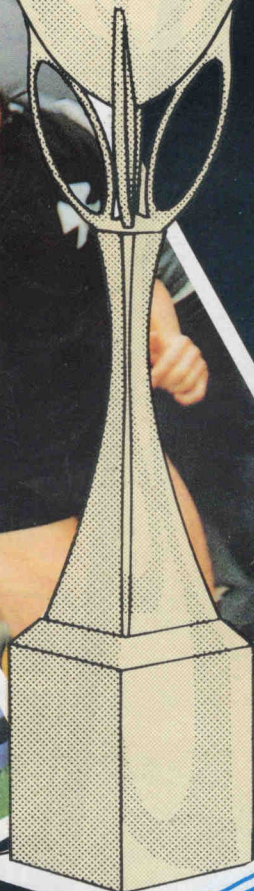


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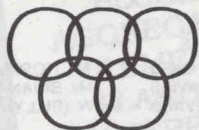
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Welcome Cardiff/Croeso Caerdydd
From Martin Thomas, President Neath RFC



standards of the past. Naturally, there is added spice today in that both clubs will want to go on to the National Stadium on the first Saturday in May. Thanks to the competition sponsors Schweppes and the Welsh Rugby Union the Cup Final has become one of the truly great occasions in the sporting calendar.

Our visitors have not enjoyed the best of seasons in relation to their illustrious history. Out of 31 games played Cardiff have won 17, drawn 1 and lost 13. It would be as well for the Gnoll faithful to remember though, the tremendous victory they scored over Llanelli in the last round which is fully deserving of our congratulations.

Cardiff's points total is 725 which includes 109 tries, with Steve Ford, Anthony Donovan and international outside half David Evans heading the list of individual try scorers with 7 each, will obviously demand the closest attention from Neath's back row this afternoon.

I am sure that everyone from Cardiff will join us at Neath in congratulating Ron Waldron on his appointment as the Wales Coach and Chairman of Selectors. We thank him for what he has done for Neath and know he will spare none of his talents in doing the same for his country.

The hospitality Neath has always received at the Arms Park will be reciprocated today as we offer each one of our visitors a very warm welcome.

Croeso Cynnes i bob un ohonnoch chi sydd wedi teithio yma o Gaerdydd. Gobeithio y cewch brynhawn i'w gofio.

Like every other rugby lover I have looked forward most eagerly to today's match. when the draw for this round of the Schweppes Cup was made I was on a far distant shore, but I can assure you I felt the excitement as keenly as if I had been at home when Cardiff were drawn to face Neath at the Gnoll.

It is always a great pleasure to welcome Cardiffians be they players, officials or supporters and over the years there have been many fine matches between us. I am sure today's game will live up to the

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Club Scene



I am sure that everyone will join me in congratulating Mr Ron Waldron on becoming the national coach. Ron has proved himself to be the outstanding coach over the last five years and there is no reason why the success he has brought to Neath cannot be repeated for Wales. Hopefully people will not expect instant results, success does not come overnight and it took a couple of seasons of hard work laying the foundations for success at the Gnoll. These people will be delighted to learn that it is Ron's intention to carry on the onerous task of being national coach.

Every so often the Neath team produces a performance for which there are no adequate superlatives. Such was the performance of Kevin Phillips and his team at St Helens a fortnight ago when the All Whites were comprehensively beaten. As much has already been said and written about this performance, suffice for me to say that it was a privilege to be there on the day.

Neath continued their winning ways at Sudbury on the eve of the England/Wales game when they defeated Wasps by 20 points to 18 to the delight of a large crowd. The performance was not one of the better Neath performances but an evening game after a long journey is not always easy and the All Blacks did well to come away from London with a win.

During the week Roland Phillips who has turned in some excellent performances recently and showed signs of recapturing his old form represented the British Police when they played against Monmouthshire.

Neath followers will be delighted to learn that Andrew Kembery is now back in training and should be available for selection within the next week or so.

Today's match sees us renew our Cup run with Cardiff. Last season we met in the semi-final at Swansea and won by 19 points to 12.

After their win over Llanelli in the last round, Cardiff will not be short of confidence and another stirring battle is in prospect. Hopefully the game will live up to its expectations and show that despite last week's result at Twickenham, Welsh Club Rugby is in a healthy state.

Scheduled to be at today's game is the new Secretary of the Welsh Rugby Union, Mr Dennis Evans. On his first official visit to the Gnoll we extend to him a warm welcome and wish him well for the future.

Late News . . .

There was great rejoicing at Neath on Wednesday evening when the Welsh side was announced. The selection of 7 Neath players creates a new club record and everyone I am sure will join with me and congratulate all 7 on their selection. A special word however for the 2 new caps Brian Williams and Allan Bateman. Brian has proved one of the outstanding forwards in Welsh Rugby during the past few seasons and his courage and determination to overcome serious shoulder injuries have finally been rewarded with a first cap. Allan Bateman has been in outstanding form all season. It was a mystery to Neath supporters why he was not in the squad at the beginning of the Championship Season. It is also good to see Bridges' consistent form being rewarded with a place on the bench. Joining him as a replacement will be Rowland Phillips who has been in outstanding form since returning after a shoulder injury. We wish Ron and the team selected to play Scotland the very best next Saturday.

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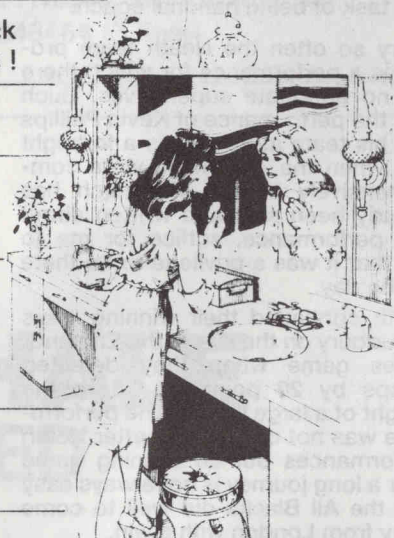
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Celebrity Page



1984 — Dawn of a New Era !

By Malcolm Lewis, Western Mail Sport

Brian Thomas predicted it would happen. "We'll win the cup," he said. The former Neath team manager was right, of course. He was only wrong in his timing.

Few people, except their most ardent supporters, believed that Neath stood a chance in that 1984 cup final against star-spangled and power-packed Cardiff.

It seemed sheer cheek to suggest that Cardiff could be beaten. John Scott, who was leading them for a record fourth consecutive year, was one of nine internationals in the side.

The Wales pair of Terry Holmes and Gareth Davies at half-back behind the most formidable scrummaging machine in Wales. Outside them in the threequarter line were Alan Donovan, Mark Ring and Adrian Hadley.

Not only that, the pack contained the best line-out jumper around in Bob Norster together with the formidable front row of Alan Phillips, Ian Eidman and Jeff Whitefoot.

To compete with all that talent, Neath could boast of only one capped player. That was their international wing Elgan Rees, who led the side.

It looked a one-horse race but the men from the Gnoll were to cause a big surprise on that April day in 1984. Though Cardiff won, they were out-scored 3-2 in tries and were given the fright of their lives by the tearaway Neath forwards, who hustled and hustled the favourites completely out of their stride.

Cardiff were able to assert themselves only through their superior goal-kicking. Gareth Davies made the difference in the 24-19 result by firing over four penalty goals and converting both tries, which came from Owen Golding and Gerald Cordle.

But the honours went to Neath. Their diminutive scrum-half Gareth Jones outshone the great Holmes and won the vote as Man of the Match. He set the cup-final alight with a cheeky interception of his rival's pass to race almost the length of the field.

Though collared at the last gasp by Cordle, he exploited the attacking position he had gained by slicing through from the next scrum and scoring an opportunist try without a hand laid upon him.

The hard running of David Jacob at centre was another Neath feature and he was responsible for the two other tries.

Sadly, the little hero of that cup-final was to fade into obscurity but his outside-half partner was to become one of the giants of the game. Jonathan Davies had yet to make his mark.

The match was particularly significant because it was the dawn of a new era for Neath. They were the first club in Wales to break away from the set-piece syndrome which was bogging down Welsh rugby and show that fit, mobile and fully committed forwards were the key to success.

Unfortunately, Welsh rugby has taken a long time to learn the lesson, particularly at national level where the Neath influence is long overdue.

This will be the sixth time for the clubs to meet in the cup. Neath won the first encounter in 1972 on their way to becoming the first club to hold the cup.

Cardiff were hot favourites at the time as they possessed that superb half-back pair of Gareth Edwards and Barry John but the blue-and-blacks went out 16-9 in the semi-final, with Neath drawing their inspiration from that pint-sized customer, Dai Parker.

Since then, Cardiff have won three in a row until the semi-final of last year when Mike Rayer's hat-trick of penalty goals and Mark Ring's drop goal were not enough to save them from a 19-12 defeat.

Thorburn matched Rayer's penalty contribution and, for good measure, converted one of the two tries by wings Chris Higgs and Alan Edmunds. As everyone knows, Neath went on to make Brian Thomas's prediction come true.

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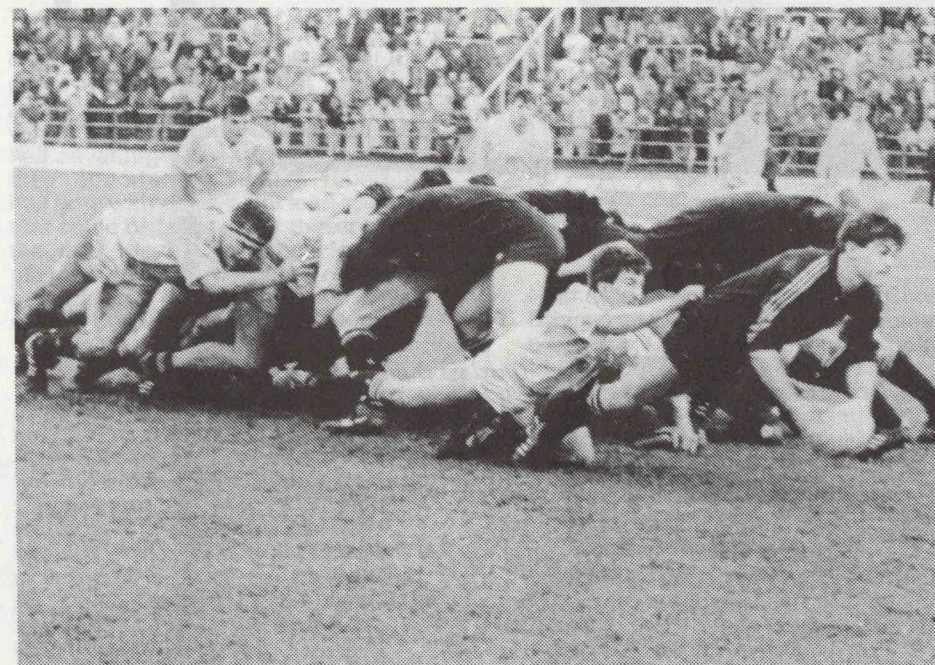
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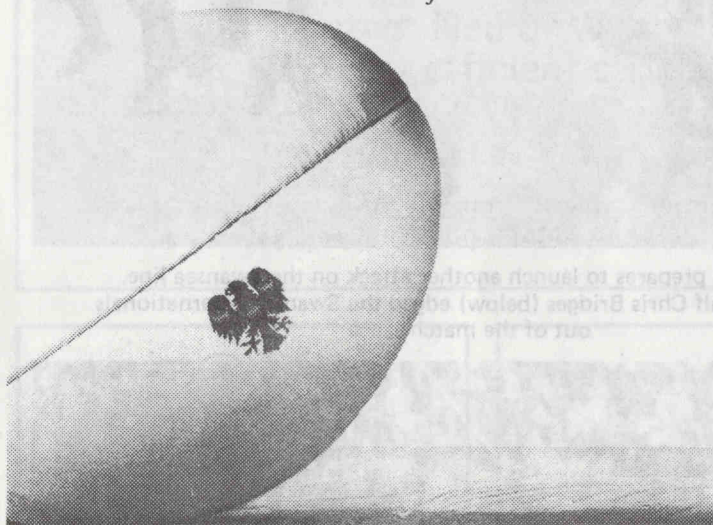



Paul Williams prepares to launch another attack on the Swansea line.
He and scrum half Chris Bridges (below) edged the Swansea Internationals
out of the match.



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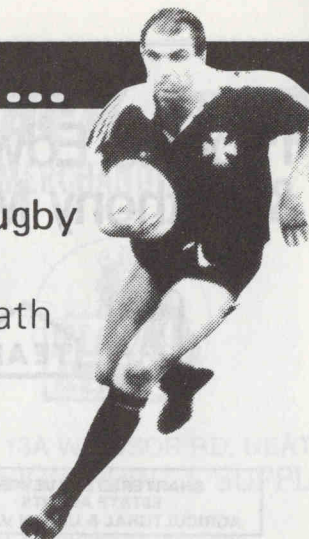


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After The Match...

This Is The Way To Play Rugby
Martyn Morris
reports on Swansea v Neath



It was the sort of game I like to play, on a good surface despite the terrible conditions and with two teams eager to play an open game with the forwards fully supporting the backs. The superb refereeing of Clive Norling was a major factor in the way the game was played, for the enjoyment of players and spectators.

This is the way to play rugby and I believe that this match demonstrated that Neath have the best standard of rugby in Wales.

From the kick off it was plain that the game was to be played at a furious pace. With Neath playing into the wind Swansea had most of the first half advantage and made the most of their opportunity. Turning round at half time with a two point lead spectators could be forgiven for thinking that the final result would be close. As players, however, we were confident of adding a lot more points to the margin between us and the Whites.

I was more than pleased to score two tries out of our final tally of seven but Alan Edmunds' tremendous run for the try which Paul Thorburn scored was not only exciting, it was skilful in the way it was done. That try also should have silenced Paul Thorburn's critics that he does not have speed. As I recall, Paul started the move and was there pace by pace with Alan to take the scoring pass.

We forwards can be proud of the way we played against Swansea and will be aiming for a repeat performance today against Cardiff. Rowland Phillips' display was brilliant and proved his return to form. It was great to play in that pack in a performance that I believe will be talked about for a long time to come.

Allan Bateman and Colin Laity were in top form in the centre, Allan showing a lot of guile and Colin giving an exhibition of his strength. There is no doubt in my mind that we at Neath have the finest centre pairing in Welsh rugby.

Neither is there any doubt that Chris Bridges and Paul Williams had a clear edge over Robert Jones and Anthony Clement at half back. They showed great class in that match and I was interested to read a leading rugby writer's view that Chris should, at the very least, be seen as the number two to Robert in the Welsh squad.

It certainly was a great game to which both teams contributed. I enjoyed playing and I hope you enjoyed watching. Thank you for your support.

Thomas, Edwards & Anthony Morris



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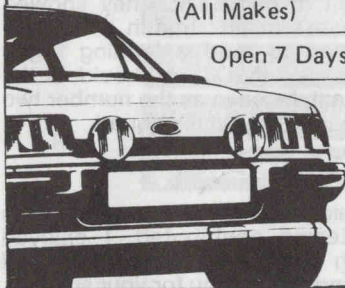
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The Teams



Schweppes Cup

Neath
Castell Nedd

- 15 Paul Thorburn *
- 14 Chris Higgs
- 13 Colin Laity †
- 12 Allan Bateman †
- 11 Alan Edmunds †
- 10 Paul Williams
- 9 Chris Bridges
- 1 Brian Williams
- 2 Kevin Phillips * (C)
- 3 Jeremy Pugh *
- 4 Gareth Llewellyn *
- 5 Glyn Llewellyn
- 6 Rowland Phillips *
- 8 Mark Jones *
- 7 Martyn Morris *

- Full Back (Cefnwr)
- Right Wing (Asgell dde)
- Right Centre (Canolwr)
- Left Centre (Canolwr)
- Left Wing (Asgell chwith)
- Stand off (Maswr)
- Scrum half (Mewnwr)
- Loose head Prop (Y rheng flaen)
- Hooker (Bachwr)
- Tight head Prop (Y rheng flaen)
- Lock (Yr ail reng)
- Lock (Yr ail reng)
- Left Flanker (Blaenasgell)
- No.8 (Y rheng ol)
- Right Flanker (Blaenasgell)

Cardiff
Caerdydd

- 15 Mike Rayer
- 14 Steve Ford
- 13 Mark Ring * (C)
- 12 Mike Hall *
- 11 Richard Jones
- 10 David Evans *
- 9 Paul John
- 1 Mike Griffiths *
- 2 Ian Watkins *
- 3 Steve Blackmore *
- 4 Stuart Nunnerley
- 5 Andrew Sutton
- 6 Mathew Lloyd
- 8 Howard Stone
- 7 Ritchie Collins *

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Rupert Moon, Jason Ball, John Davies
Andrew Thomas, Adrian Varney

Referee
L J Peard

Replacements :
Andy Moore, Craig Miller, Stuart Roy
Ian Greenslade, Tony Orrell,
Mark Edwards

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Ron Waldron
Coach— Glen Ball
Fitness Coach — Alun Roper

Touch Judges
David Cherry, D R Davies
Replacement F R Phillips

Coach — Alan Phillips
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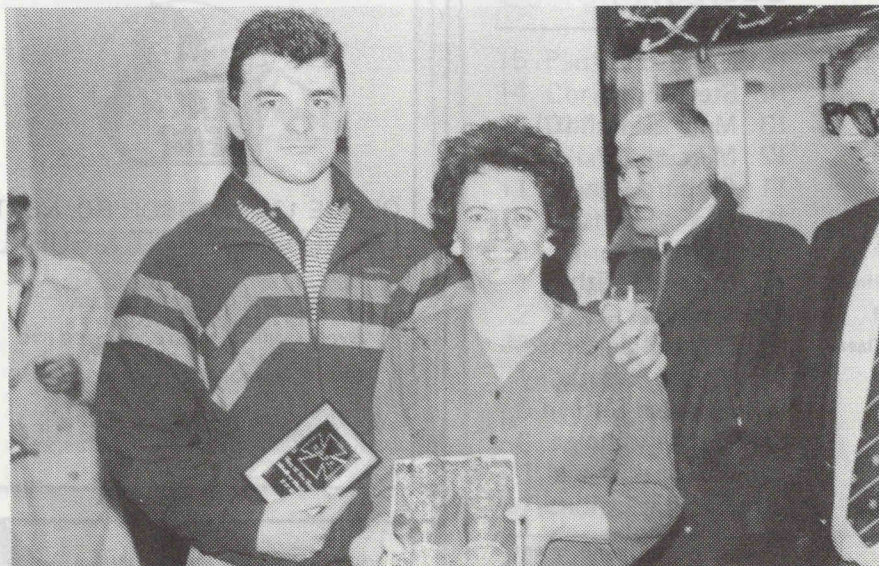


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Off the field...



Patrons' Association



Photograph : Dai Jones

Rowland Phillips, at the top of his form, was Man of The Match in the match against Pontypool. He received his reward from Mrs. Cynthia Besley.

From the Treasurer



**Schweppes
Cup**

Important

In the eventuality that Neath RFC will be appearing in the semi-final, all applications for tickets will have to be made by post, to an address to be published later. Applicants should enclose the necessary remittance, SAE and season ticket.



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In recent years



Neath v Cardiff Past Results

- 8.9.84 Neath 13 Cardiff 12**
P Thorburn, E Rees, D Jacob, C Bridgewater, S Powell, G Jones, J Davies, B Williams, M Richards, M Jordan, H Richards, S Dando, A Hopkins, D Morgan, G Jones
P Thorburn 3 pens. A Hopkins try.
- 23.2.85 Neath 12 Cardiff 21 Cup**
P Thorburn, E Rees, D Jacob, R James, S Powell, C Gnojek, J Davies, B Williams, M Richards, P Langford, H Richards, B Clegg, P Pugh, D Morgan, L Jones
P Thorburn 3 pens, J Davies D.Goal.
- 14.9.85 Cardiff 30 Neath 27**
C Bridgewater, E Rees, D Jacob, S Powell, G Tucker, C Gnojek, S Davies, P Jackson, K Phillips, S Dando, R Hughes, P Pugh, T Waldron, D Morgan, R Webster, G Davies, J Pugh
S Davies 4 Cans. 1 Pen. C Gnojek try, T Waldron try, G Davies 2 tries
- 19.4.86 Neath 22 Cardiff 12**
P Thorburn, G Davies, S Powell, D Jacob, E Rees, S Griffiths, R Jones, P Jackson, K Phillips
S Evans, B Clegg, S Dando, R Phillips, M Jones, L Jones, G Tucker.
P Thorburn try, 2 Con. G Davies try, R Jones try 2 pens.
- 13.9.86 Neath 24 Cardiff 7**
P Thorburn, S Powell, R Griffiths, C Laity, E Rees, C Gnojek, J Davies, J Pugh, M Richards,
S Evans, B Clegg, C Jones, P Pugh, M Jones, L Jones, S Griffiths
P Thorburn 2 Cons. 4 Pens. R Griffiths try, C Gnojek try.
- 28.3.87 Cardiff 16 Neath 6 Cup**
S Powell, G Davies, C Laity, R Griffiths, E Rees, C Gnojek, J Davies, D Joseph, M Richards,
J Pugh, K Cheval, H Richards, P Pugh, M Jones, L Jones, P Jackson
C Laity Pen. J Davies Pen.
- 12.9.87 Cardiff 6 Neath 35**
P Thorburn, E Rees, R Griffiths, C Laity, A Edmunds, A Booth, P Williams, D Joseph,
K Phillips, J Pugh, B Clegg, P Jackson, P Pugh, R Phillips, L Jones
P Thorburn try, 3 cons, 3 pens. Tries R Griffiths, A Edmunds, J Pugh, P Jackson.
- 16.4.88 Neath 41 Cardiff 12**
P Thorburn, S Powell, R Griffiths, C Laity, A Edmunds, A Booth, P Williams, D Joseph,
K Phillips, J Pugh, B Clegg, P Jackson, R Phillips, D Pickering, L Isaac
P Thorburn con. R Griffiths 2 tries 1 con, C Laitytry, P Williams 2 tries con pen.
K Phillips try, J Pugh try, A Booth try
- 10.9.88 Neath 49 Cardiff 10**
P Thorburn, M Carrington, R Griffiths, C Laity, A Edmunds, C Bridges, P Williams, B Williams
K Phillips, J Davies, G Llewellyn, P Jackson, R Phillips, M Jones, L Isaac
P Thorburn try 7 cons 1 pen, M Carrington 2 tries, R Griffiths try, C Laity try, B Williams try,
J Davies try, M Jones try.
- 8.4.89 Neath 19 Cardiff 12 Cup Semi-Final**
P Thorburn, C Higgs, C Laity, A Bateman, A Edmunds, C Bridges, P Williams, B Williams,
K Phillips, J Pugh, H Richards, G Llewellyn, P Pugh, M Jones, D Pickering
P Thorburn con 3 pens, C Higgs try, A Edmunds try.
- 15.4.89 Cardiff 20 Neath 12**
P Thorburn, C Laity, A Bateman, J Griffiths, A Edmunds, G Williams, A Davies, D Joseph,
L Isaac, J Davies, H Richards, G Llewellyn, R Phillips, P Pugh, G Williams.
P Thorburn con pen, A Davies try drop goal.
- 9.9.89 Cardiff 13 Neath 36**
P Thorburn, C Higgs, C Laity, A Bateman, A Edmunds, C Bridges, A Davies, D Joseph,
K Phillips, J Davies, A Kembury, G Llewellyn, M Morris, M Jones, D Pickering. P Jackson
L Isaac.
P Thorburn 3 cons 2 pens, A Bateman A Edmunds 2 tries, A Davies try, D Joseph try.

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Allan Bateman makes one of the many exciting breaks he made to split the Swansea defence



Two forwards who played superbly at St. Helens. Rowland Phillips has the support of the charging Jeremy Pugh

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On the Social Front

Ivan Rees Reports . . .

Welcome to our friends from Cardiff on this special occasion which can certainly be called the "Top of The Pops" match.

You are very cordially invited to our clubhouse before the match for a refreshing drink and a filling bar snack before taking your seats or your place on the terraces. We also look forward to your company after the final whistle has blown whatever the result. There is a quick service counter which serves bottled beer in addition to the main bar so you won't have to wait very long for a much needed drink after shouting yourselves hoarse during the game.

All the members of the social club send their heartiest congratulations to Ron Waldron on landing for himself the task of shaping up the Welsh team, a step we all believe is long overdue. Good Luck, Ronnie!

Many thanks are due to those people, both committee members and others, who gave their time to make such a success of the social side of the recent Ladies International. It was a long, hard day for the staff and quite a slog for the back-up staff who cleared away the aftermath.



It was a pity Wales lost on the day but at least we know by the letter of thanks we received that the ladies enjoyed the great welcome they were given at Neath.

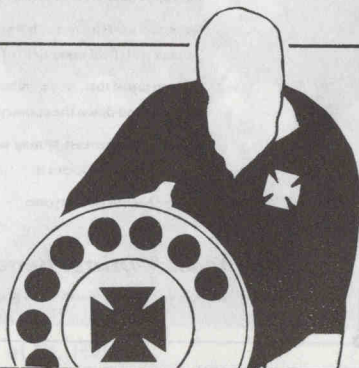
A reminder now in closing that video tapes of matches to date are available for purchase. There is also an excellent Compilation tape for sale at £12 which records a hundred Neath tries. The way he's going, Alan Edmunds will soon need one of his own. Video tapes of matches cost £8 and will be supplied within a few short days of your placing your order.

Here's hoping for a good game today and the result you want!

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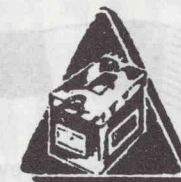
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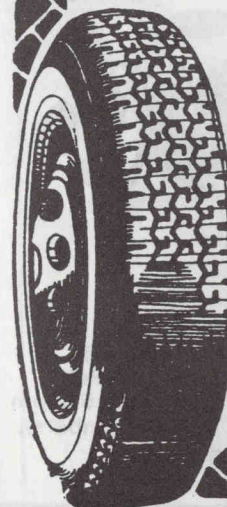


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Supporters Club News



Last Friday on the eve of that Twickenham debacle Neath visited Sudbury to play Wasps. There was a large contingent of Neath Supporters present to see the All Blacks win by 20-18, although the score line does not reflect our true superiority. Some of the decisions of the referee had most spectators baffled and the penalties he awarded to Wasps kept them in the game – their only try coming from an interception near the end, whereas Neath scored from good tries. Though both sides were below strength due to international calls, injury and unavailability it was satisfying to register a win against one of the top clubs in the English League First Division.

Today we have another difficult task in the quarter finals of the Schwepes Cup. Cardiff have been very successful in the competition during the past years and they will be looking to add the scalp of the All Blacks to that of the Scarlets who they overcame in atrocious conditions in the previous round. We extend to all Cardiff Supporters a warm welcome to the Gnoll and hope that conditions for the match will be better than those experienced in the previous rounds and that we shall see a game worthy of two great clubs. Welsh rugby needs a lift, so let's hope that today's game will show that, at least at club level, there is still pride and ability in plenty.

We would like to congratulate Ron Waldron our team manager on his appointment as coach to the national team. Ron has a difficult job to do, but if there's one person capable

of improving the fortunes of Wales, it has to be the Neath Team Manager. I'm sure that all Welsh supporters wish him well.

On Wednesday next, 28th February, we have a Merit Table match against Ebbw Vale at Eugene Gross Park. Transport has been arranged for supporters – tickets must be obtained from the Club Shop today.

Supporters are reminded that the club shop is open before and after all home games and also between 7-8pm on Training nights.

Transport Ebbw Vale v Neath



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The Llewellyn brothers, Glyn and Gareth, monopolised the line out throughout the afternoon at Swansea.



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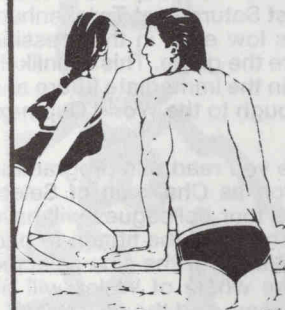
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Points of view ...

Rod Rees
Comments

The speed of events since last Saturday's Twickenham horror story has given us very little time to catch our breath. It seemed that the precise second when Mr Leslie blew his whistle to end the collective Welsh pain, the rumours and denials started.

They continued through Sunday and must have been the main topic of conversation on every Wales bound form of transport. I was going to use the word coach but that would have been indelicate.

By Monday every journalist had been ordered by his editor to keep his ears to the ground because the rumours, and the denials, were getting stronger. It was almost an anti-climax when the story was confirmed by the W.R.U. late into the afternoon: John Ryan had resigned.

Now it is time to switch to the future tense. Ron Waldron is the new man in charge and it is not the fact that a chapter in Welsh rugby history is finished but that a new one is opening which should now demand our concentration. It is, quite simply, the Waldron philosophy. It is only the future which is important because that is the only direction in which you can take action.

It was a great comfort to hear Ron say during a brief television interview that there are talented young players in Welsh rugby. For far too long there have been far too many former international players, in particular, who have said that talented Welsh players do not exist any more. Such a negative attitude does not help anybody and is one which Ron Waldron will be anxious and quick to disprove.

How much support will the new coach be given by the top clubs is the big question perhaps, because that has been the problem faced by some of his predecessors. I believe it was Tony Gray who once highlighted this



kind of thing when he talked about some clubs refusing to play their players out of their normal positions to try and strengthen the national side and widen the options for selection.

It is time for us to recognise the need for a "pyramid" in Welsh rugby if we are to succeed at international level. Every single club, junior or second class clubs included, must see a strong national side as the pinnacle of that pyramid and work towards it.

On Tuesday morning Kevin Phillips and I took part in a Radio Cymru programme which discussed Ron Waldron's appointment. Ron's greatest virtue became clear to the listeners the moment Kevin began to speak, his belief in the players and then, quite naturally, the belief his players have in him. Kevin stated plainly that this was the missing element under the departed coach and that last Saturday at Twickenham morale was low even in the dressing room before the game. This is unlikely to happen in the immediate future and indeed through to the World Cup next year.

By the time you read this programme Ron Waldron as Chairman of Selectors and his four colleagues will have made the choice of the fifteen to play Scotland. Whatever the side selected I believe the whole of Wales will be behind the team and the new coach.



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Fixtures and Results

September

2—Moseley	H	W	55—9
3—North Shields	A	W	64—6
9—Cardiff	A	W	36—13
16—Newport	A	W	30—7
19—Narbeth	A	W	48—9
23—Pontypridd	A	W	27—20
30—Bath	H	L	13—17

October

7—Llanelli	A	L	12—14
14—Glam. Wanderers	H	W	49—0
21—Sale	H	W	60—0
25—New Zealand	H	L	15—26
28—Swansea	H	Postponed	

November

4—Wales v New Zealand			
8—Pontypool	A	W	22—6
11—Bridgend	H	W	31—12
18—WRU Cup Aberaman	A	W	46—6
21—South Glam. Inst.	A	W	50—6
25—Cambridge University	A	W	32—7
29—Newbridge	A	W	19—6

December

2—Orrell	H	W	36—10
5—Cross Keys	H	W	80—0
9—Bridgend	A	W	22—16
16—WRU Cup		Postponed	
19—Maesteg	H	W	30—6
23—Ystradd Rhondda Cup	A	W	57—3
26—Aberavon	H	W	50—0
30—Abertillery	A		

January

6—Ebbw Vale	H	W	52—18
13—Llanelli	H	W	19—3
16—Newbridge	H	W	43—4
20—Wales v France			
27—WRU Cup		W	19—6

February

3—Pontypool	H	W	34—10
10—Swansea	A	W	42—12
16—Wasps	A	W	20—18
17—England v Wales			
24—WRU Cup			
28—Ebbw Vale	A		

March

3—Wales v Scotland			
6—South Wales Police	H		
10—Maesteg	A		
13—Penarth	A		
17—Abertillery	H		
23—Greystones	A		
24—Ireland v Wales			
27—Pontypridd	H		
31—Tredegar	A		

April

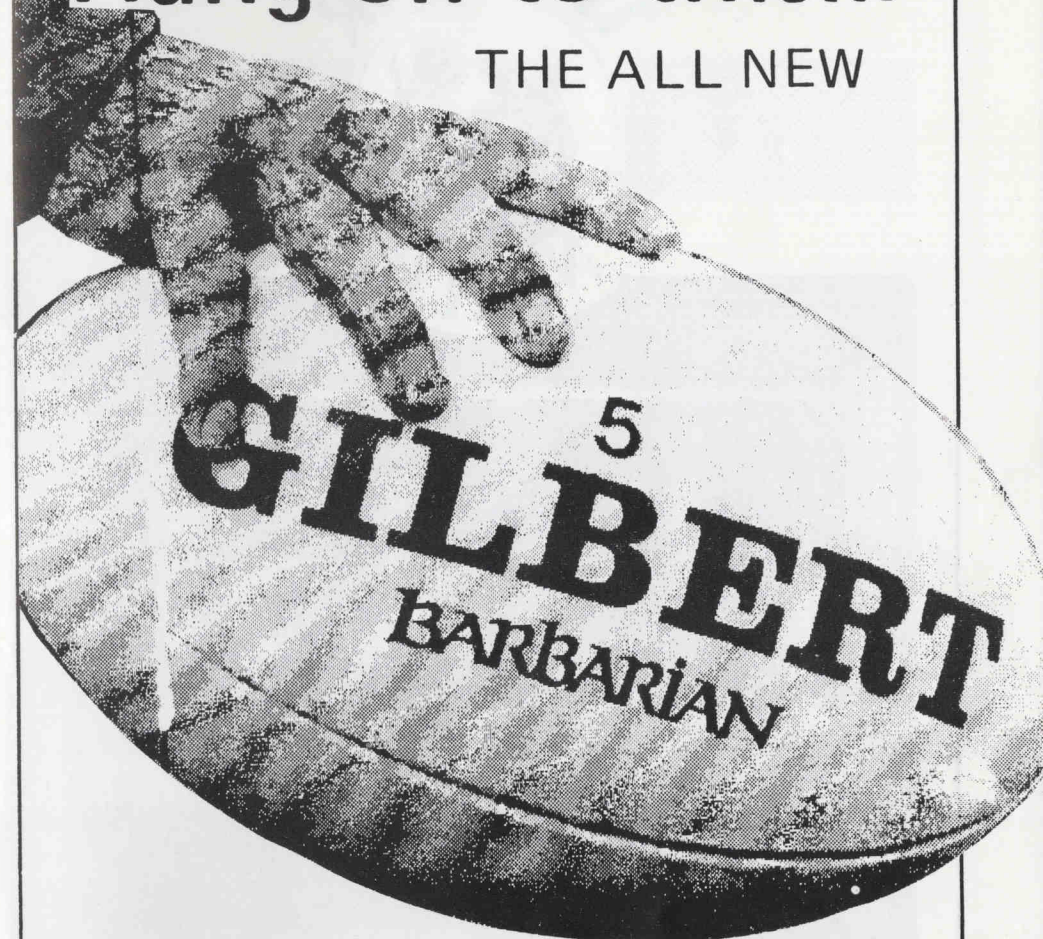
7—WRU Cup Semi Final			
7—Gloucester	H		
10—Brynaman	H		
14—Coventry	H		
16—Aberavon	A		
21—Cardiff	H		
24—Glynneath	A		
28—Newport	H		

May

5—WRU Cup Final			
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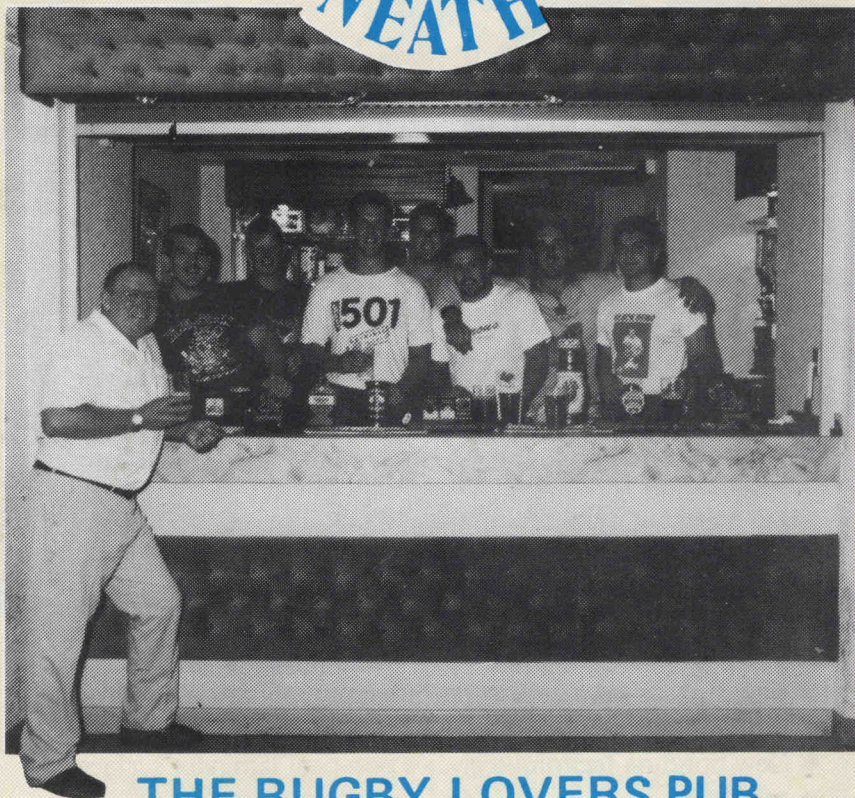
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