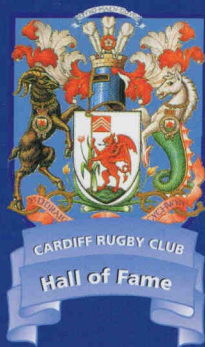


Cardiff Rugby



Football Club



# HALL *of* FAME

A CELEBRATION

BY ALAN EVANS



## *Introduction*

CARDIFF RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

The idea of a sporting Hall of Fame is not new. There are football, boxing and cricket 'halls' dotted around the globe and since 1997 there has been an International Rugby Hall of Fame as well as various Welsh organisations. What may be different about ours is that it is confined to the players of one club and, at least for this first induction, has focused on living rather than all-time legends.

Yet even within these constraints, which effectively mean that the playing careers of the inductees must have been at some time since 1945, it has been no easy task to identify fifteen names above all the others who have brought credit and honour to Cardiff Rugby Football Club. However, undeterred by the extent of the task ahead, a consultation exercise began in the spring of 1999. First a specially selected panel of distinguished rugby historians, broadcasters and journalists and then the supporters of the club were asked to nominate players who both on and off the field represented all that was best about the club. It was also decided to impose a further constraint – that all the nominees must have finished playing by 1990. Arbitrary, perhaps, but very similar to the guidelines employed by the International Rugby Hall of Fame.

To the relief of all concerned, twenty or so names quickly emerged as the short-price

favourites and when they were further considered the fifteen initial inductees were finalised. Indeed, this first fifteen, if we can call them that, has a satisfying mix, with representatives from each of five decades and with famous Lions, international and club captains and long-serving club warriors alongside one another. There are eleven captains of Wales and ten club captains, twelve British Lions and four members of the triumphant Cardiff XV that beat the All Blacks in 1953, an aggregate total of over 350 international caps and, incredibly, 4,000 plus appearances for the first team and countless numbers for the Cardiff Athletic Rags XV

But the Hall of Fame is not a celebration of statistics, however impressive they may be. It is more an acknowledgement of achievements and contributions almost intangible and indefinable in their qualities – a moment of genius here or a season of endeavour there but, more than anything, a prolonged acceptance that playing in blue and black brings with it certain responsibilities and, in turn, a personal contribution to the legacy of expectation that will be assumed by future generations.

A word about the 'Hall' itself. For the time being, it does not exist in a physical sense, but this is not unusual. One day we all hope it will. In the meantime the Trophy Room

of Cardiff Athletic Club will display the treasures of the past. Another development in future years will be the induction of great men no longer with us, from E Gwyn Nicholls and Percy Bush, through Wilfred Wooller and right down to Stan Bowes, Cliff Davies and many others. There will, too, be recognition of not just players but the great committeemen and officials of the club, most of who were, of course, players themselves who stayed on or returned to give wonderful service. Names such as Charlie Arthur, Les Spence, Danny Davies and Hubert Johnson spring immediately to mind. Then there are those players of a more recent vintage : Scott and Hayward, Howe and Goodfellow, Walker and Hall, Mikey Rayer, Dai Young – the list is endless, but one day they will surely take their place amongst the club's immortals.

For now, though, we must bask in the glory and reminiscences of fifteen good men and true. A magnificent seven half-backs, a quartet of outside backs and just four forwards may say something about the type of rugby played by Cardiff Rugby Football Club over the last half-century or so, but one thing's for sure : tonight is just the beginning because there's plenty more blue and black heroes where this first fifteen came from.

# The First Fifteen

CARDIFF RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

*Jack Matthews*

JACK MATTHEWS (1945-1952)

*Bleddyn Williams*

BLEDDYN WILLIAMS (1945-1955)

CARDIFF 8 NEW ZEALAND 3

Cardiff Arms Park

November 21 1953

REX WILLIS (1947-1958)

*Rex Willis*

JOHN NELSON (1946-1959)

*John Nelson*

CLIFF MORGAN (1949-1958)

ALUN PRIDAY (1952-1965)

LLOYD WILLIAMS (1952-1964)

*Alun Priday*

HOWARD NORRIS (1958-1972)

*Howard Norris*

GERALD DAVIES (1965-1978)

*Gareth Edwards*

GARETH EDWARDS (1966-1978)

*Gareth Edwards*

BARRY JOHN (1967-1972)

*Barry John*

GARETH DAVIES (1974-1986)

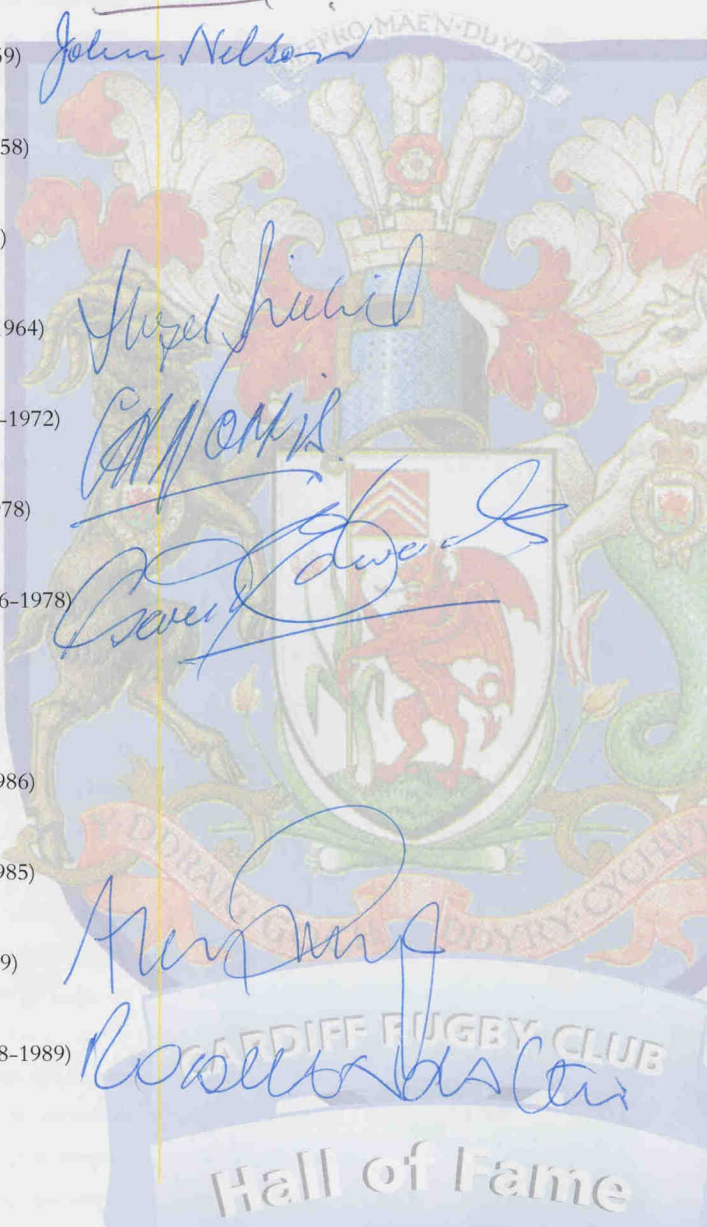
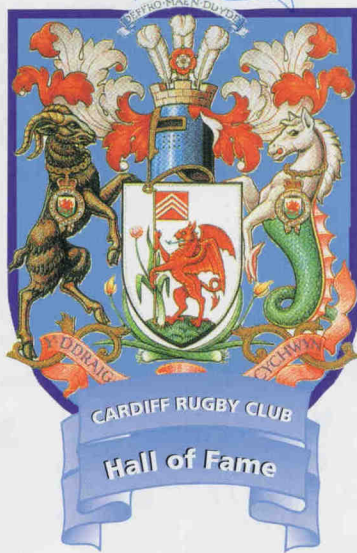
TERRY HOLMES (1974-1985)

ALAN PHILLIPS (1973-1989)

*Alan Phillips*

ROBERT NORSTER (1978-1989)

*Robert Norster*







## Jack Matthews

CARDIFF RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

In September 1945 Dr Jack Matthews began his Cardiff career as he meant to continue : as a leader of men and alongside Bleddyn Williams. 'I was elected captain for that first season after the war and I considered it to be the greatest of honours - and I still do today,' he says, with the certainty and positive approach that was to be the hallmark of his play on the field and the high standards he set off it.

Jack had been born and bred in Bridgend and at the local County School for Boys he had combined the duties of the head prefect in the weekday corridors of learning with the leadership of the rugby team on the Saturday morning pitches of Glamorgan and west Wales. Before long he was playing as an 18-year old in a Welsh final trial at Swansea and making occasional appearances for Bridgend and Aberavon

and then for Neath against

Cardiff, directly marking the colossus of his day,

Wilfred Wooller. By

April 1940 Jack was

playing with Wooller

in a Red Cross international against England and, when

his medical

ambitions

decreed that he

should leave an

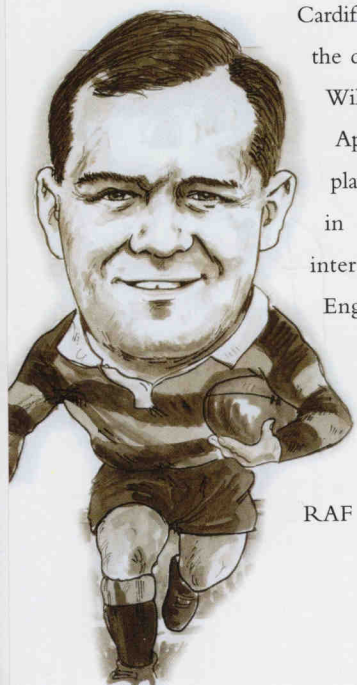
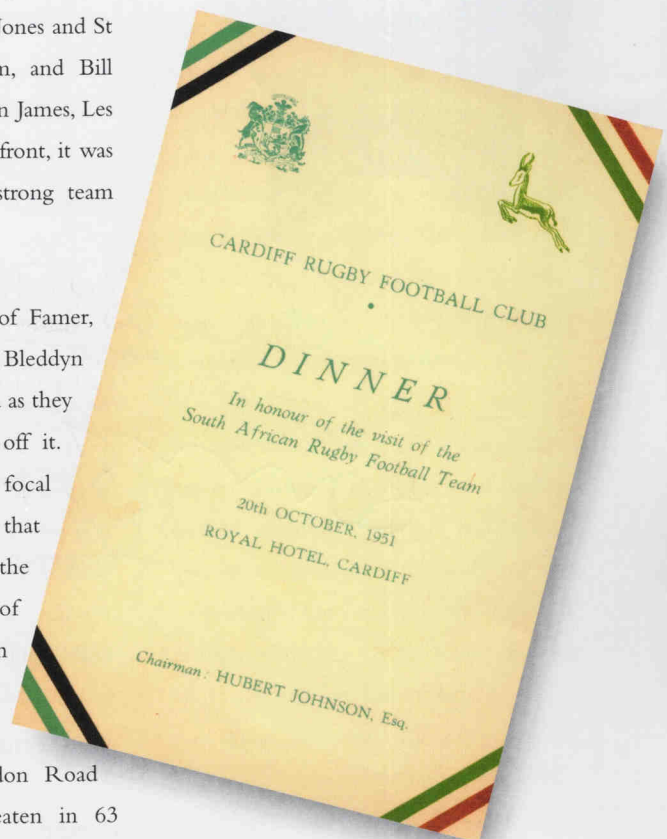
RAF camp in

Oxfordshire and return to the Welsh School of Medicine, he was soon playing for the Meds against Cardiff at the Arms Park.

After the war, the newly-qualified Dr Jack Matthews combined his belated military duties for the Royal Army Medical Corps with his leadership of the Cardiff Club. 'I took both those duties very seriously,' he remembers, 'and at the Club with great men like Billy Cleaver and Billy Darch at half-back, Graham Hale, Glyn Jones and St John Rees behind the scrum, and Bill Tamplin, Cliff Davies, Maldwyn James, Les Manfield and many others up front, it was not too difficult to have a strong team spirit!'

Then there was fellow Hall of Famer, Bleddyn Williams. Jack and Bleddyn were as inseparable on the field as they still are half a century later off it. Together they formed the focal point of a free-running team that ran up 17 straight victories in the autumn and early winter of 1945. Jack has no doubt which game stands out during those victorious months. 'We went up in November to Coundon Road where Coventry were unbeaten in 63 games - a remarkable record. There were thousands of Welshmen living in the area because they had gone there during the Depression of the 1930s in search of jobs.

**Born June 21 1920**  
**180 games in 7 seasons**  
**54 tries**  
**Club Captain 1945-46, 1946-47, 1951-52**  
**Centre**  
**17 caps for Wales (1947-51)**  
**British Lions tour to New Zealand and Australia 1950 (6 Tests)**





**Jack Matthews captains Cardiff  
in the 75th Anniversary match  
against the Lions in 1951**

What a game it was! The ground was packed and we were reduced to 14 men when Billy Darch was injured, but Cleaver went to scrum-half and we still scored four tries as we won 16-3. It was a great day for Cardiff and I was so proud of the team.'

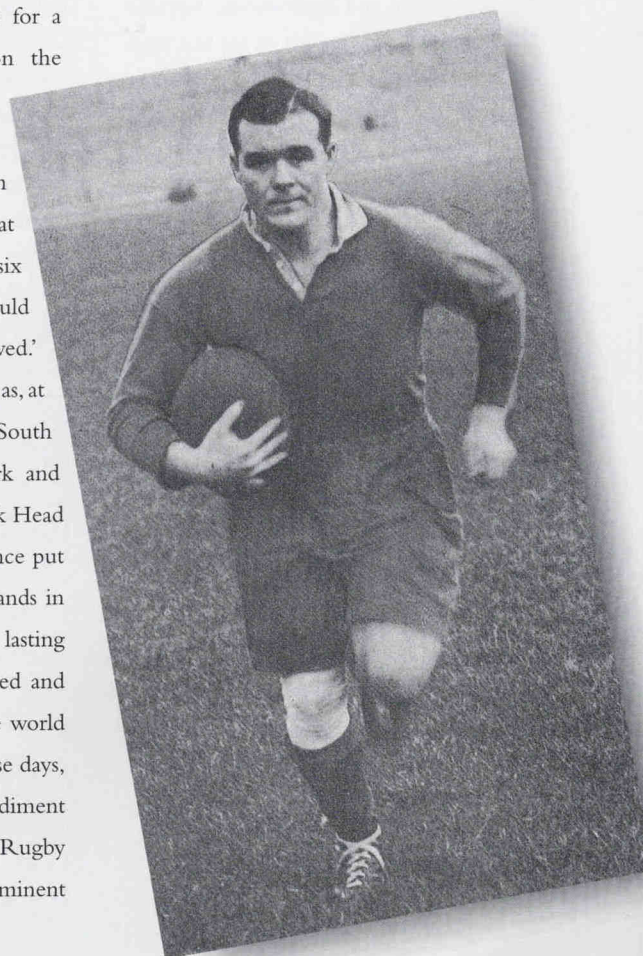
Defeat eventually came on Boxing Day against the legendary New Zealand Kiwis who were blazing a triumphant trail across post-war Europe. By then, though, the style of Jack Matthews' team was well-established as the crowds flocked to watch the club wherever they played. It was no surprise when he was re-elected captain for the following year and by the time of his third year of office in 1951-52 the combination of Matthews' electrifying pace off the mark, honed by his years as a champion schoolboy sprinter, and his unforgiving tackling with Williams' inch-perfect passing and deadly sidestepping had long since established them as the greatest centre duo in the world. The international grounds of the home nations and then, in 1950, new audiences as the Lions toured New Zealand and Australia wondered at their skills.

Dr Jack captained the Lions three times in provincial matches as well as Wales in what turned out to be his final international in Paris in 1951, but it was always Cardiff and the Arms Park that had a special place in his



affections. 'We trained for one hour twice a week on Tuesday and Thursday evenings; matches were played every Wednesday and Saturday afternoon; and after every game we'd pop across to the City Arms for an hour and then return to the Club for a singalong with Cliff [Morgan] on the piano. They were happy days'.

There was just one disappointment in Jack Matthews' final season, defeat against the mighty Springboks by six points to three - 'A game we should have won, but I had a try disallowed.' Even in defeat there was consolation as, at the end of their 31-match tour, the South Africans returned to the Arms Park and presented the Club with a Springbok Head in recognition of the best performance put up against them. That trophy still stands in the Trophy Room today. It is a lasting reminder of the type of rugby played and the respect it drew from around the world in the era of Dr Jack Matthews. These days, he continues to be the living embodiment of all that is good about Cardiff Rugby Club. He is, without doubt, an eminent figure in the Hall of Fame.







## Bleddyn Williams

CARDIFF RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

**B**leddyn Llewellyn Williams knew from his days as a schoolboy rugby player in Taff's Well that Cardiff was the only club for him. His elder brothers Gwyn and Brinley had preceded him in Blue-and Black colours before the war and, as the whole world of rugby now knows, five more of the remarkable Williams' fraternity - Lloyd, Vaughan, Cenydd, Elwyn and Tony - would one day follow in his footsteps. But in the ten years from 1945 it was Bleddyn who first achieved his lifelong ambition of playing for the Club and then became the unchallenged Prince of Centres.

'As things turned out it was a natural progression for me,' remembers Bleddyn. 'I played for Cardiff Schools in the Dewar Shield and then for Wales Schools at full-back, which was a bit of a shock to the system to say the least, then went off to Rydal School and captained the Anglo-Welsh Public Schools against the Welsh Secondary Schools at the Arms Park. I'd

also had a game for the Rags at

Ebbw Vale and a Cardiff

XV at Chepstow,

with Lyn Williams at

fly-half and Wilf

Wooller at centre,

so I kept in touch

with the Club

during the war.'

In fact, by 1945

Bleddyn

Williams had

already

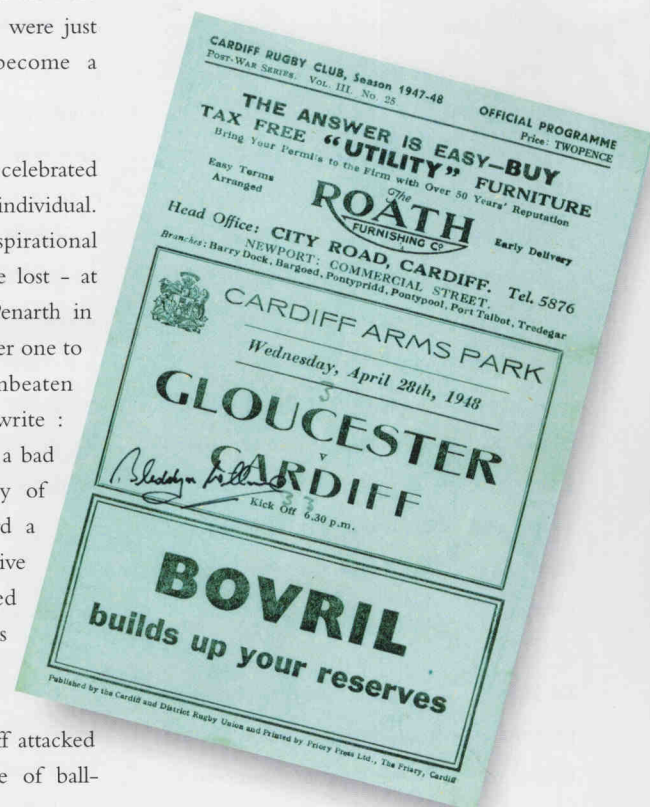
experienced a wide

range of representative rugby for Wales in the Services Internationals and for the Barbarians, the RAF, and even the Great Britain team that took on the impressively titled 'Dominions XV' at Leicester in the closing months of war. So it was no surprise when he saw out his service days at St Athan that he found himself at the Arms Park and part of Jack Matthews' Cardiff team of 1945-46.

'Yes, Jack and I soon hit it off and, yes, we enjoyed playing together. We had done so before, for an East Wales team that played the British Army in 1943, but now we were playing week in, week out, and were just two parts of what was to become a complete club team.'

The 1947-48 season was to be a celebrated one for both the team and the individual. Under Haydn Tanner's inspirational leadership only two games were lost - at Pontypool in September and Penarth in March. Not that Bleddyn was ever one to worry too much about unbeaten records. Years later he was to write : 'Invincible records are generally a bad thing, for in pursuing a policy of maintaining an unbeaten record a team is inclined to pursue negative tactics.' No one ever accused Bleddyn Williams or the teams under his influence of being negative. Throughout a season of 39 wins and 182 tries Cardiff attacked with a free spirit and a range of ball-handling and running skills rarely seen over such a prolonged period. The culmination was the final home game against Gloucester

**Born February 22 1923**  
**283 games in 10 seasons**  
**185 tries**  
**Club Captain 1949-50, 1953-54**  
**Centre**  
**22 caps for Wales (1947-55)**  
**British Lions tour to New Zealand and Australia 1950 (5 Tests)**





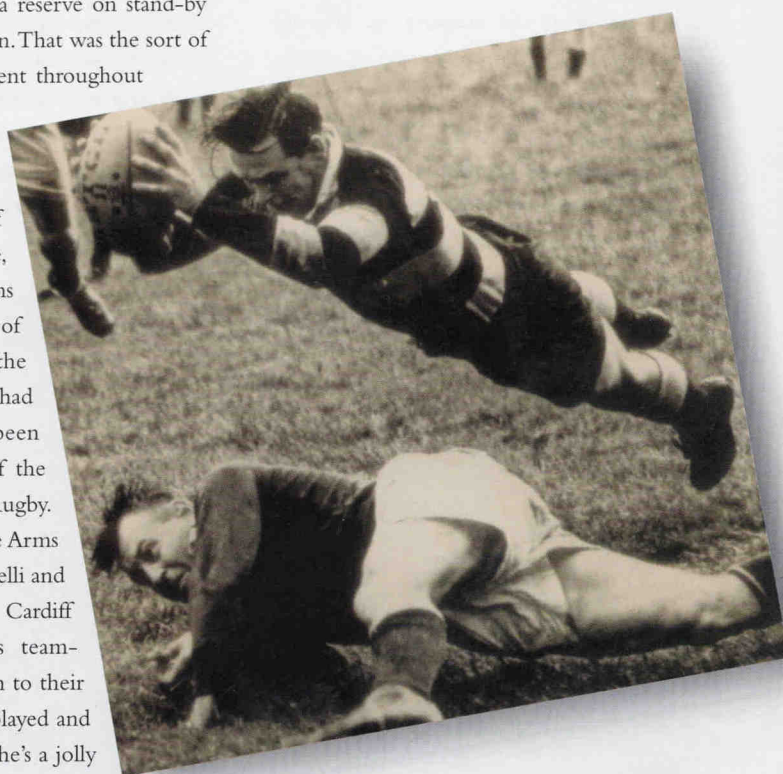
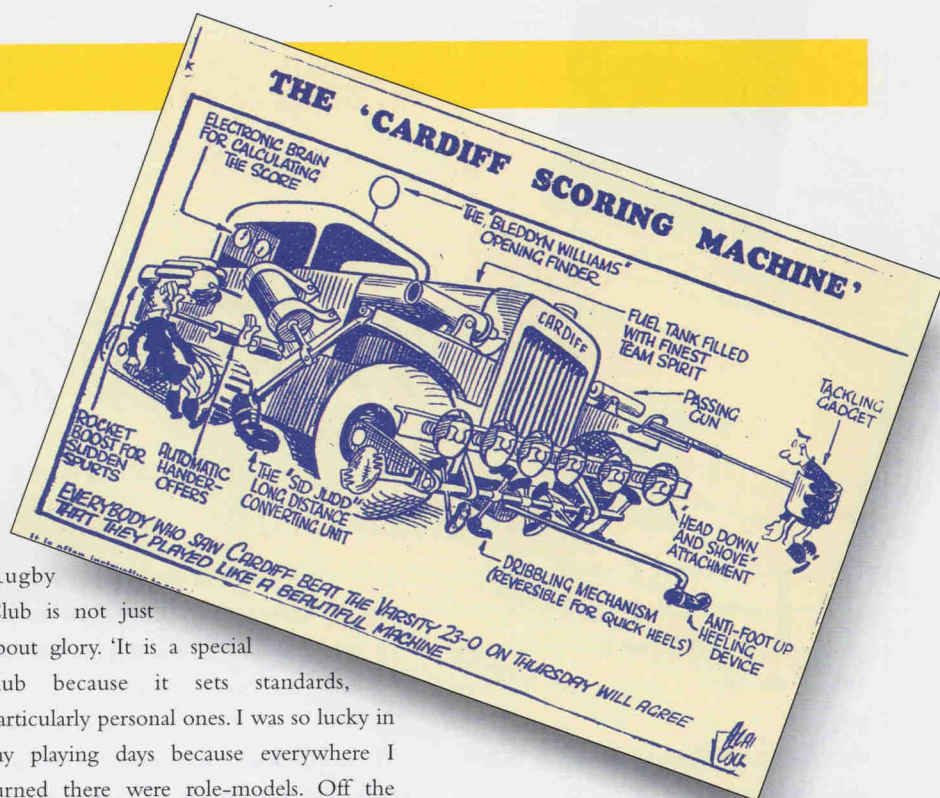
on April 28 1948, with the team running in nine tries including four to Bleddyn, giving him a record total for the season of 41. It was an individual achievement that was to remain unsurpassed for nearly 50 years.

The highlight of Bleddyn Williams' two periods of captaincy, and arguably the club's greatest day this century, was the defeat of the All Blacks in 1953. Considering the dearth of surviving newsreel film, the opening 20 minutes of the game on November 21 1953 continues to hold a remarkable place in the memories of those who were there and in the imaginations of those who were not. It is now part of Cardiff folklore that Bleddyn instructed his team to run at every opportunity, even from the deepest defence. Thus, after six minutes Cliff Morgan broke from a scrum in his own 25 with his captain's words still ringing in his head: 'We have got to try things... if we fail, we fail, but we have got to be different.' And different it was as Gwyn Rowlands cross-kicked and Sid Judd gathered to score at the Westgate Street posts. Different, again, when within minutes Bleddyn carried on another audacious Morgan break-out from defence and this time Rowlands keeps the ball and touches down himself in the right corner. 8-3 was the score-line and the historic final score and the messages of congratulations poured in from around the world. Four weeks later, Bleddyn did it again as he led Wales to a 13-8 victory over New Zealand at the Arms Park. No one has repeated the feat in the long years since.

For Bleddyn Williams, though, Cardiff

Rugby Club is not just about glory. 'It is a special club because it sets standards, particularly personal ones. I was so lucky in my playing days because everywhere I turned there were role-models. Off the field there were Hubert Johnson and Brice Jenkins, Les Spence and SC Cravos, Gwyn Porter and Arthur Cornish. On it, just think of the forwards we had from Les Manfield, Maldwyn James and Gwyn Evans in the early days to John Nelson and CD Williams. And then there was Bowes! Stan could play tight and loose head and, because of that, was a reserve on stand-by 19 times in one season. That was the sort of loyalty that was evident throughout the Club.'

The greatest role-model and setter of standards, of course, was Bleddyn Williams himself. By the time of his retirement in the spring of 1955 he had long since been established as one of the legends of Cardiff Rugby. His final match at the Arms Park was against Llanelli and at the end, another Cardiff victory secured, his teammates hoisted him on to their shoulders, the band played and the crowd sang, 'For he's a jolly good fellow.' Forty four years on we all still agree.



**A famous try for Bleddyn Williams against South Africa in 1951**





## Rex Willis

CARDIFF RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

**H**e was posh, drove fast cars, had long hair, and looked an unlikely scrum-half. But he also had big shoulders, a strong frame, and was prepared to defend you against all opposition...' Cliff Morgan has no doubts about the unique qualities of William Rex Willis. But even though he may have been renowned for his unflinching defence at the base of the scrum and the immaculate service he gave, first to Billy Cleaver and then Cliff over several seasons for both Cardiff and Wales but there were still some tough days in Blue and Black colours that even now, half a century later, Rex himself still recoils at the memory of. Like for instance the joys or otherwise of playing Neath at the Gnoll.

'Some of my greatest team-mates in international rugby were men of Neath like Rees Stephens and Roy John, but the prospect of them coming through the

lineout on their home patch to

flatten you in the

midwinter mud

didn't exactly

make you

want to jump

out of bed on

a Saturday

morning,' admits

a chuckling

R e x

Willis.

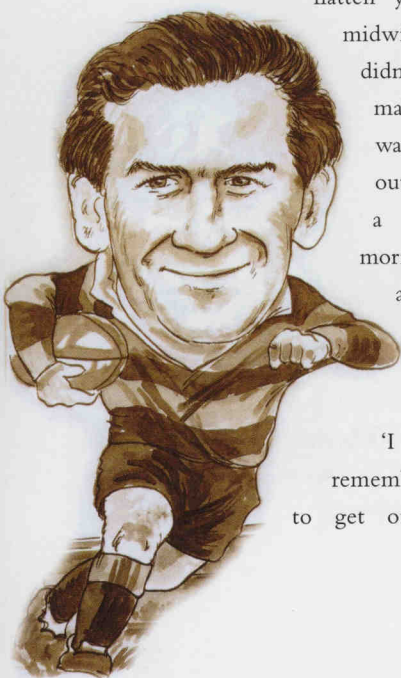
'I particularly  
remember having  
to get out of our

snowbound team bus to push it up the hill from Culverhouse Cross and then getting to the Gnoll just in time for another mauling!'

Those who saw Rex in his prime will take such self-deprecating memories with a large pinch of salt for, as Danny Davies recalls in his centenary history, the scrum-half was 'the personification of courage'. Having joined the Club from Llandaff, where he had attended the Cathedral School, and having the unenviable task of succeeding Haydn Tanner in the first team, Rex Willis soon made his mark. Two seasons with the successful Rags team proved to be ideal preparation but no one could have forecast the huge leap he was to make in 1949-50 as, within the space of a few months, he became a first team regular, was selected for Wales without playing in a trial in what was to be a Grand Slam season, and then became a British Lion en route to a great adventure in New Zealand and Australia.

For many years a successful cinema owner and entrepreneur in the city, Rex Willis was and still is something of a stylist and free spirit off the field and one story, apocryphal or otherwise, is that when the Lions assembled in London prior to departure, he arrived without too much luggage to see him through the long weeks of travel ahead. Not one to worry about these domestic matters, within hours he had done all his clothes shopping in the best West End stores, replete with the very best luggage to carry them in.

**Born October 25 1924**  
**208 games in 11 seasons**  
**14 tries**  
**Club Captain 1952-53**  
**Scrum-half**  
**21 caps for Wales**  
**British Lions tour to New Zealand and Australia 1950 (2 Tests)**



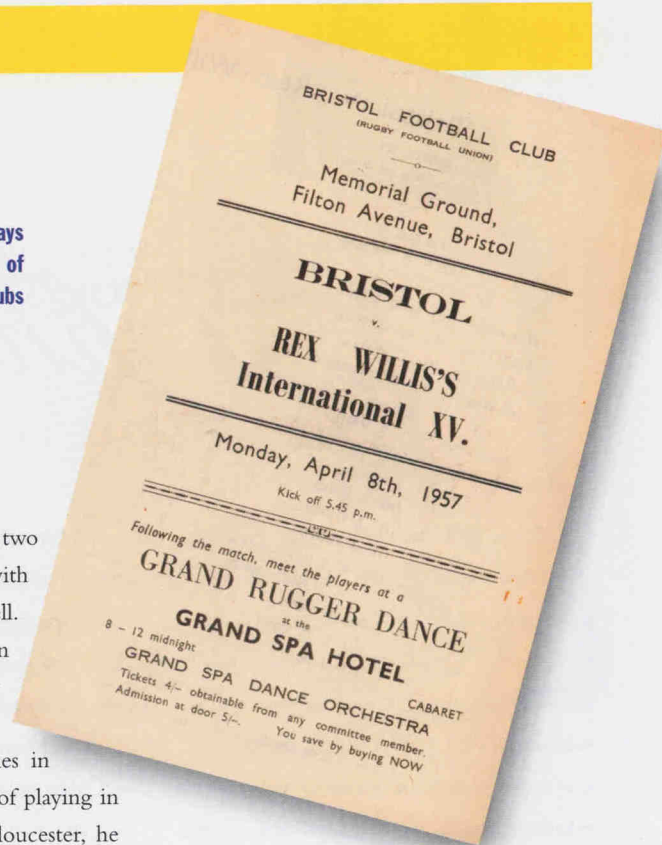


**Rex Willis was always prepared to take teams of his own to play other clubs**

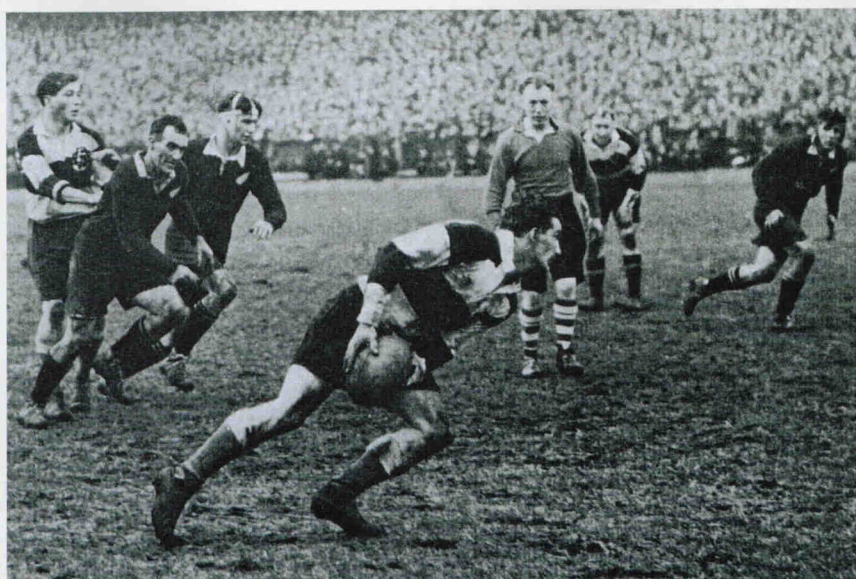
Regarded by some as the third scrum-half in the Lions party, Willis had established himself in the Test team by the time of the two internationals in Australia, where he partnered Ireland's Jack Kyle at half-back. 'I was very lucky in my career to be able to play with the three best fly-halves of their generation - Billy Cleaver, Kyle and, of course, Cliff Morgan - all very different, but all great players.' Throughout the early 1950s, Rex Willis was himself a world-class player. The Morgan - Willis partnership was as famous as John and Edwards or Jenkins and Howley in later years, as they blazed a trail for Club and country and were automatic selections for the high profile Barbarians matches against South Africa and New Zealand. Rex, indeed, led the Baa-baa's against the All Blacks in 1954 and then went on to captain Wales against France.

Rex Willis still ruefully acknowledges the part played by a great Cardiff colleague in his departure from the international scene. 'I was playing in the final trial in January 1956 and being in the Probables with Cliff Morgan I was already pencilled in for the Wales team that would play England at Twickenham a fortnight later. But marking me in the Possibles back row was my former Cardiff team-mate CD Williams. He was playing for Neath (them again!) at the time but he hadn't forgotten all my tricks and happily spent the first half gobbling me up. The result was the selectors swapped me with Onllwyn Brace at the interval and he went on to partner Cliff for the rest of the season.'

So Rex Willis spent his final two seasons week in, week out, with the Club he had served so well. Despite the frustrations of an injury-wrecked captaincy season in 1952-53, the hardships of snowbound games in Neath or the fond memories of playing in front of hostile crowds in Gloucester, he remains relaxed and proud about his great years in the Blue and Black jersey. 'To play for Cardiff was a privilege and there was always a few laughs,' concludes a man who never takes matters too seriously. 'One day at Moseley I dived pass to Cliff and then Bleddyn dummy-scissored with Dr Jack who got flattened by three defenders as Bleddyn touched down 40 yards away. Jack wasn't amused, the tacklers were bemused to say the least, and me, well, I just died laughing...'



**Rex Willis was a regular choice for the Barbarians and here he sends one of his famous dive passes against the All Blacks in 1953**





## John Nelson

CARDIFF RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

Ask John Nelson about what his long association with Cardiff Rugby Football Club means to him and he is likely to come out with 'C'est magnifique!' He is unashamedly proud of his years as the most reliable of club players when, he says, 'All our opponents, from whatever club and of whatever ability, were treated with equal respect' and then his long period of unstinting service as a committeeman and his duty, as he sees it, to 'maintain the heritage of the Club and the game.'

And yet he almost never got to the Arms Park at all. 'I had played for London Welsh and Eastern Counties and after leaving the Royal Navy applied for a Cardiff trial, but there was a mix-up about my address - the selection card was sent to HMS Ganges - but I turned up on spec and, as luck would have it, I managed to get a game even

though there were 92 budding Blue and Blacks all hoping for a game.'

So in September 1948 JD Nelson made his first team debut against Bristol. 'For me it was dream come true, being a Cardiff boy educated at St Iltyd's and being very aware of

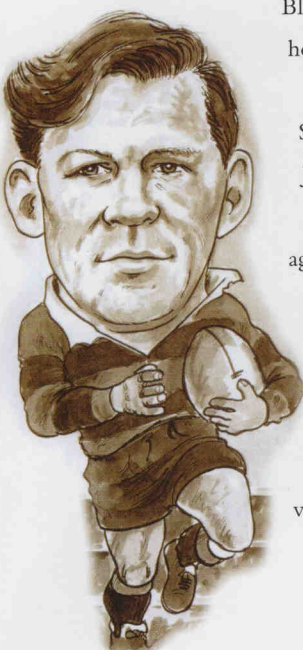
everything the Club stood for in the world of rugby.' From that day to this he has taken the responsibilities of representing the Club very seriously and no one has ever doubted the style and standards he has maintained. Invariably immaculate in dress both on and off the field, at six feet one inch and weighing in at just over thirteen and a half stone, John cut an impressive figure. At first he played both open-side and blind in the back row and often packed down at number eight, or lock as it was then known, with the redoubtable Welsh cap Gwyn Evans at open-side. Indeed, by the end of his career he had played in no less than six different positions for the Club.

'As well as the three roles in the back row I had a game on the wing and another at full-back, but it was the one at scrum-half I remember most. We were on tour in the north-west and by the time we played at Sale we had run out of scrum-halves so I was press-ganged in to playing there with Jack Matthews as my partner and I think I did alright because we won the game!'

By the early 1950s, however, John was an established first-choice wing-forward and part of a pretty effective back-row unit. 'I think we had a perfect blend : CD Williams was at open-side and he was the all-round

**Born July 25 1926**  
**291 games in 13 seasons**  
**34 tries**  
**Blind-side flanker**  
**Wales Final Trial and**  
**Wales Reserve 1955**  
**Barbarian**

**...by the end of his career he had played in no less than six different positions for the Club...**





athlete and tackler who could disrupt the best midfield opponents; Sid Judd was in the middle and what a player he was at breaking through a tackle or cutting through the back of a lineout; and I was the support player with a bit of pace...it was great fun playing together.'

The unit was put to its ultimate test in November 1953 for the famous game against Bob Stuart's All Blacks. 'I was confident that we would do well under Bleddyn's leadership but I left nothing to chance - I trained beforehand for 22 consecutive days, which was unheard of at the time!' History relates that all the preparation was in a good cause with the back row playing no little part in the Club's historic eight points to three victory.

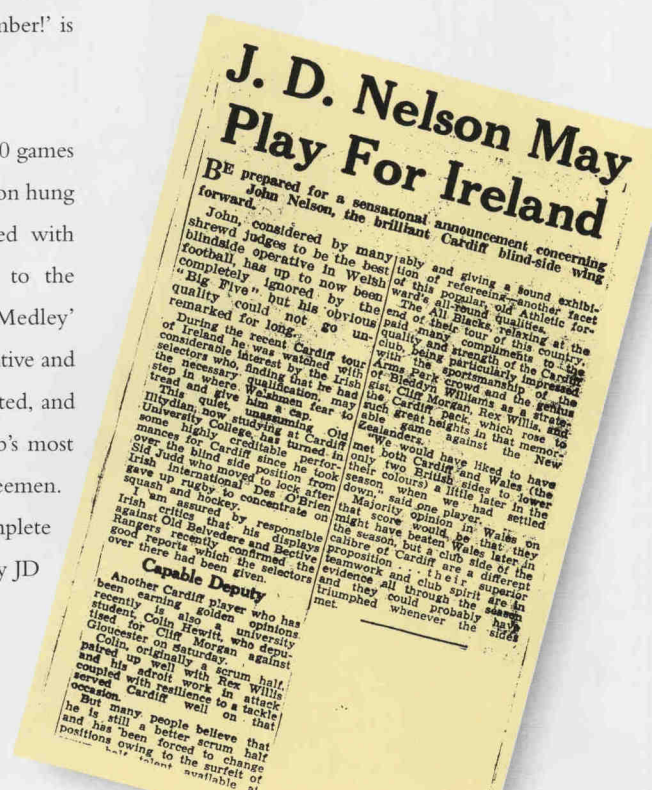
It was obviously a red-letter day in John Nelson's playing career and the following year he almost went a step further with a Welsh cap - but not quite. 'It was a bit ironic, really, because after all the years of toil and sweat I got into the Welsh trial matches on the back of a try I scored against Neath by outpacing their flying wing Keith Maddocks. Apparently this impressed the Big Five no end but when I got to the Final Trial in January 1955 I didn't quite do enough to dislodge the Probables back row of Glyn Davies, Sid Judd and Clem Thomas from the Wales XV.

I had also marked Rex Willis and Cliff Morgan and that was a challenge for anybody.' Even so, John had done well enough to be a reserve for Wales against England and Ireland that season and other representative honours followed.

A great admirer of the Barbarians and all they stood for he was delighted to accept an invitation to play for them on their Easter Tour of Wales in 1958, first against Penarth and then against Newport. 'Imagine the satisfaction for me, an out-and-out Blue and Black, to play for the Baa-baa's against those so-and-so's in Black and Amber!' is how he jokingly remembers it.

Twelve months later with nearly 300 games for Cardiff under his belt John Nelson hung up his boots. He was not finished with rugby as he was soon recruited to the BBC's Saturday night 'Sports Medley' programme, for which his authoritative and distinguished voice was ideally suited, and he was and still is one of the Club's most loyal and hard-working committeemen. No Hall of Fame would be complete without the qualities represented by JD Nelson

**John Nelson's qualities  
were much in demand**





## Cliff Morgan

CARDIFF RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

Larger than life – is an over-used phrase. So is 'charismatic character'. And so, for that matter, are the adjectives 'brilliant', 'inspirational' and 'incomparable' when applied to so many sportsmen and women. Yet they were all appropriate for Clifford Isaac Morgan. From the moment he first played for Wales a month before his twenty-first birthday, through his great days with the Lions in South Africa in 1955, to his early retirement at the age of 28 three years later, he really was a superstar of the game. But the Cardiff Club was the base and security from which he built his rugby empire.

'To an eighteen-year old schoolboy Cardiff stood out as the best club in the whole wide world. Not just because of its playing achievements, but because of what it represented. It had standards and it had

class. Yes, Cardiff was the team that every club in the world wanted to beat but, more than that, when I think of the sheer class of players like Bleddyn and Jack and Rex my spine still tingles,' is how Cliff regards the Club.

And, of course, it is exactly how all those privileged to see Cliff Morgan play, or to meet him or just listen to him in the years since, regard Cliff himself. Everywhere he went in the world he represented the best of Cardiff rugby, and for everything he did the Club in turn was delighted to be identified with him.

At Tonyrefail Grammar School his gym teacher was Les Hayward, a prop forward who had himself played 19 games for the Club, and it was he who brought the young fly-half to the Arms Park. He had already played for the Welsh Secondary Schools and within two years was to play for Wales opposite his great Irish hero Jack Kyle. But not before he had served his apprenticeship with the Rags and then the first team of Cardiff. 'My first game was at Cambridge University with Jack Matthews and Bleddyn Williams and although Dr Jack gave me a rollicking for delaying my passes I can safely say that I learnt more in one afternoon with them than I had in my entire playing career up to then !'

In those early Cardiff teams with Cliff Morgan were not just Jack and Bleddyn and Rex Willis, but great club men like Peter Goodfellow and John Nelson, still loyal servants of the Club today. Cliff retains a great warmth for them and many others. 'John Nelson always seemed to be in the

**Born April 7 1930**  
**202 games in 8 seasons**  
**38 tries**  
**Fly-half**  
**29 caps for Wales (1951-58)**  
**British Lions tour to South Africa 1955**  
**(4 Tests)**







right place at the right time and played some wonderful games for Cardiff. Peter Goodfellow was a typical unsung hero – a dedicated forward and he stands out in my memory for all the fabulous things that rugby really is at its best. Then there was Malcolm Collins and Eddie Thomas, Alun Priday was safety personified, and Colin Howe, well, he was what you might call a character...'

And Cliff Morgan has no doubt at all who was Cardiff's greatest clubman. 'Hubert Johnson was a player and a chairman and his name lives on in the Club Museum, but more than all of that Hubert had a style and a presence and a humility which is synonymous with the Club itself. In other words, he was class.'

Cliff will talk about the virtues of others for hours without ever touching on his own contribution. Thus a game at Northampton is memorable because Bleddyn got two tries for Cardiff and Jeff Butterfield three for the Saints and 'we lost but I loved that game' or 'Little fly-half Roy Burnett was absolutely brilliant for Newport and I remember feeling second-rate.'

There was nothing second rate about Cliff. He sees great qualities in his fellow human-beings that he himself has in abundance. He

was the greatest drawing card in rugby for nearly a decade and the Arms Park faithful saw more of him than any other crowd. A narrow miss against the Springboks in 1951 and then glory against the All Blacks and Wallabies, all in partnership with Rex Willis, were only a part of his contribution to the Club, for he was always prepared to play every Wednesday and Saturday, near or far. When Willis was unavailable, he delighted in partnering Brian Mark ('a fine player and another great club man') and then Lloyd Williams who went on to be Cliff's scrum-half in his final seven internationals for Wales.

At the very beginning of Cliff Morgan's playing career his mentor at Tonyrefail Ned Gribble gave him the clearest advice : 'Cardiff's the place for you!' For that we will all be eternally grateful. But for now, there's only one place that Cliff Morgan the rugby player can be – the Cardiff Hall of Fame.

**Cliff Morgan leads out the Club for the last time in 1958**





## Alun Priday

CARDIFF RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

**A**lun Priday had his eyes on Cardiff from an early age. 'My father brought me to the Arms Park in 1945 and I saw Dr Glyn Jones scoring a try in the corner. From that moment I was hooked - it was always my ambition to play for the Club and seeing the wonderful 1947-48 team in action made me even more determined.'

The ambition and determination reached fruition by the time Alun was 22 years-old as first he won his Athletic XV cap in 1951-52 and then his First XV cap for 20 games three seasons later. The real red letter day, though, was Easter Monday of 1953 and his first game for the senior side against the Harlequins. 'I remember every moment of it,' he says proudly. 'We won 15-3 with Cliff Morgan, Haydn Morris, CD Williams and Lloyd Williams scoring tries - it was a great day in my rugby life.' Before the end of that season he got another game against

Cheltenham and then 12 more the following year before establishing himself as a regular in 1954-55. 'I wasn't at that stage doing much goal-kicking because Ken Richards, Gwyn Rowlands and Sid Judd shared the duty when John Llewellyn wasn't playing, but I was just happy to be in the team.'

One of Alun Priday's

greatest memories of his entire playing career comes, in fact, from those early days when, he insists, the team performed in a way that represented all that was best about team spirit. 'There was a Welsh Trial match in Llanelli and eight of our first team regulars, including Cliff, Rex, Bleddyn, Gareth Griffiths and Gordon Wells, almost an entire back division, were involved in it. But that didn't stop us going up to Twickenham and beating the mighty Quins. I soon realised that men like Peter Nyhan, Howard Nicholls, Malcolm Collins and Eddie Thomas were the backbone of the Club.'

Alun was recognised as one of the most reliable last lines of defence in Welsh rugby ideally suited for

the catching and kicking role that was typical of the 1950s. As safe as the proverbial houses under the high ball, his trademark low, spiralling kicks to touch always kept his team going forward and soon he was attracting the attention of the national selectors in both England and Wales. 'I was invited to attend an English International Trial in Bristol in December 1956 but opted instead for the one in Swansea the following week and then played in the 'Probables' in the Final Trial of January 1957,' he remembers. He eventually won his first cap in Ireland in the following year and then another in 1961. He was unfortunate in that his peak years coincided

**Born January 23 1933**  
**410 games in 14 seasons**  
**1799 points**  
**Full back**  
**2 caps for Wales (1958-61)**

### THE WELSH TEAM

Players originally selected for today's match

**A. J. PRIDAY (Cardiff)**  
 Full-back. Aged 28 yrs. 6 ft., 13 st. 4 lb. Second cap today after first playing for Wales in Ireland in 1958 as a substitute for the originally selected Terry Davies. Priday declined an England trial chance but has had to wait a long time to be selected on his merit for a Welsh team place in preference to Davies, who has played 20 times for Wales. Priday, an outstanding all-rounder with Cardiff cricket club, played at full-back for the R.A.F. and has figured in many Welsh trials. Engineering merchant's representative.



A. J. PRIDAY

Playing for Wales on his own patch





# PRIDAY IN TOP CLASS KICKING FORM

with the career of the brilliant Llanelli and Lions full-back Terry Davies, but no one doubted that Alun was himself a player of true class.

'To play week-in, week-out for Cardiff was the nearest thing you could get to international rugby at the time, and you only have to think of the four games each year with Newport, or the annual glamour match with the Barbarians, and of course the big touring teams every three or four years to realise just how challenging it was,' he says. 'Have no doubt about it, my aim was to be in peak condition for the games with Newport, home or away. Sometimes we won, sometimes we lost, but we always knew we'd been in a game!'

Alun is unnecessarily modest about his own part in three titanic struggles against the great touring teams between 1957 and 1963. First of all he shared in a great win over the Wallabies, which was to set him on his way to his cap in Ireland three months later, and then he played, however unwittingly, a central role in the tough game against Avril Malan's Springboks in 1960.

'What a game that was. We went in to it unbeaten in 13 matches and there was a crowd of 50,000 packed in to the Arms Park. After about ten minutes I caught the ball under the old North Stand and sent it back to touch, but as I turned to walk back to my position I was hit by an almighty tackle and laid out...the rest I can't remember,' he readily admits. In fact, he had been late-tackled by the Springbok left-

wing Mannejjies Roux, described by more than one watcher as a 'guided missile', and has very little recollection of what happened for the rest of the first-half. After that, the game deteriorated into a brawl and Cardiff, reduced to 14 men when fly-half Tommy McCarthy went off with a dislocated elbow, held on bravely for a 13-0 defeat. At the end Alun Priday told the press, 'Every tooth in my head is loose and I don't know which leg to walk on.'

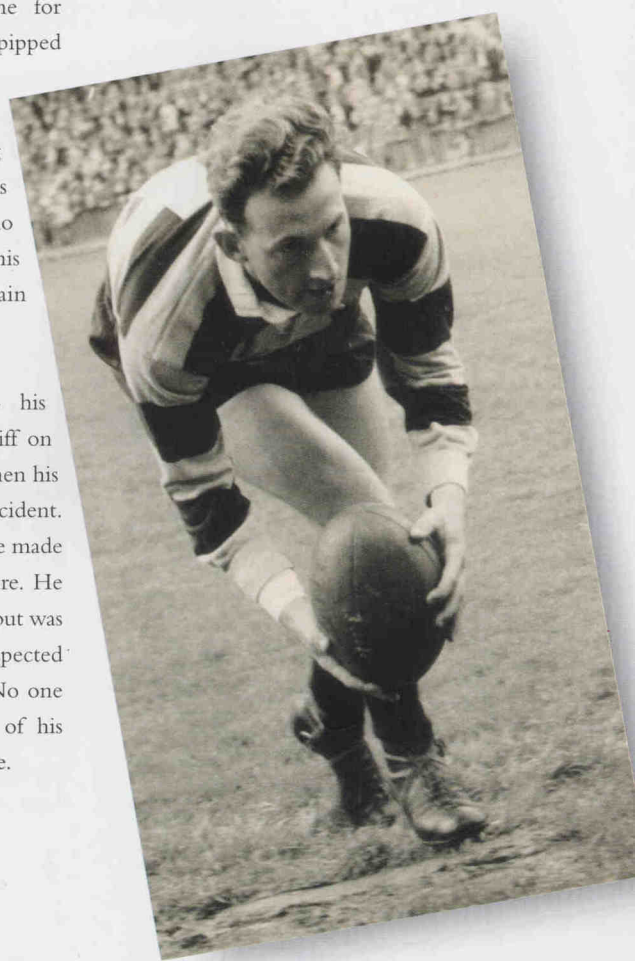
Agony of another kind was to follow in his next game against a touring team in 1963. Another capacity crowd saw the All Blacks taken to the wire thanks to a mighty effort by the Cardiff pack who created the only try of the game for number eight Cliff Howe but were pipped by a penalty and a dropped goal. Alun Priday converted Howe's try but is still hard on himself for missing two or three medium-range kicks that might have won the game. But no one else would agree with him as his general play that day was again magnificent.

Alun Priday played his final game - his four hundred and tenth - for Cardiff on September 29, 1965 at Bridgend when his jaw was broken in a controversial incident. Appropriately, his last touch was as he made the bravest of catches under pressure. He took his leave from the playing field but was soon back in the Club as a much-respected committeeman and then secretary. No one has any doubt that he is worthy of his induction in the Club's Hall of Fame.

## ALUN PRIDAY NEARS THE 1,000 MARK

By JOHN BILLOT  
WHEN he converted Cenydd Williams's try at the Arms Park last Saturday to help Cardiff conquer Gloucester, full-back Alun Priday scored 100 points for the seventh successive season. Since he won his first-team cap nine seasons ago Priday has registered 385 points—and scored a try in each season. With the 20 points he scored in season 1953-54, before he became a regular first XV member, Priday has a grand total of 605 points for the first team—and should pass the 1,000 points mark next season to crown an outstanding record of achievement for his club.

Actually, Priday, if he maintains his kicking form, could pass his previous best of 158 points in 1956-57. He accumulated 152 points (five tries) in 1960-61 and 136 points last season, which represented more than a third of Cardiff's total points. Since he took over as the club's No. 1 goal kicker from Gwyn Rowlands, Priday has become one of the most accomplished place kickers in the game and his value to the club cannot be over emphasised. No serious challenger has emerged to claim the role of principal kicker and Priday looks assured as well as ever, some time—and his place for next season with the great All Blacks' goal-kicking star Don Clarke.





# Lloyd Williams

CARDIFF RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

There is no substitute for good timing, and Lloyd Hugh Williams' entry into the Hall of Fame coincides with his fiftieth year of service to Cardiff Rugby Club. 'I played for the Rags for one season in 1951-52, then 12 years with the first team, then 26 years on the committee, and now I've had the great honour of being a vice-president for eleven years!' says a very proud man who first came to fame as the fifth of the eight brothers to play in the blue and black and went on to be a quality player and captain of Wales in his own right.

Mention Lloyd Williams to anyone who saw him play and they will immediately recall his lovely dive pass from the base of scrum and lineout, his remarkable strength around the fringes of the pack that earned him the title of 'ninth forward', and, more than anything, his courage in every game he played.

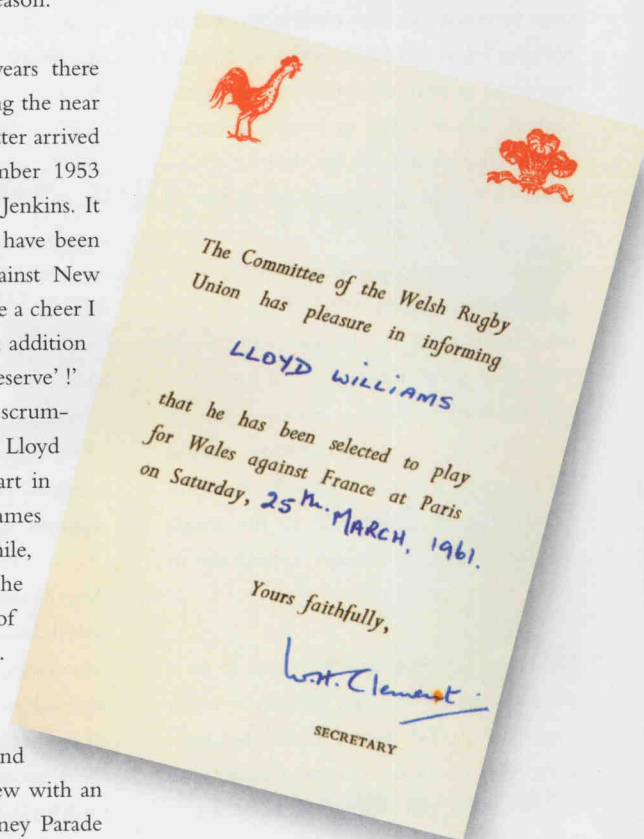
Breaking into the Cardiff team at scrum-half in the early 1950s was no easy thing, even for Lloyd Williams, who won the Dewar Shield with Cardiff Schools and played for Wales Youth against France and was then good enough to represent Combined Services. 'At that time, the first choice

was of course Rex Willis and his very capable deputy was Brian Mark, so I knew I would have to wait for my chance', remembers Lloyd. The first team debut eventually came in September 1952 against Nantes and Cognac and then the first of many memorable games against Newport. In the following four seasons he made seven, ten, eleven and fifteen appearances, enough to gain valuable experience and build a steady reputation for himself, but never quite enough to win the first team cap awarded for 20 games in a season.

But even in those formative years there were days to remember, including the near miss to end all near-misses. 'A letter arrived in the post one day in November 1953 from the Club secretary Brice Jenkins. It contained a card that said, 'You have been selected to play for Cardiff against New Zealand...' but before I could give a cheer I suddenly spotted a hand written addition in the bottom corner saying 'Reserve'!' Rex Willis was, of course, the scrum-half in that famous win, but Lloyd would one day play his own part in the history of the Club's games against touring teams. Meanwhile, another significant match that he was certainly very much part of occurred in March 1956. Newport were chasing their first-ever fourth win in a season against their arch-rivals and at the last minute Willis withdrew with an injured shoulder. Into the Rodney Parade cauldron stepped Lloyd Williams.

'It's a match and a day I will never forget,' says Lloyd. 'I thought I'd be playing for the Rags against Senghennydd that day but

**Born October 19 1933**  
**310 games in 12 seasons**  
**21 tries**  
**Club Captain 1960-61, 1961-62**  
**Scrum-half**  
**13 caps for Wales (1957-62)**



**A return to the Wales team after two years though his selection card doesn't mention that Lloyd was the Captain!**



found myself in a situation where Newport had a dozen bottles of champagne lined up and I had the big responsibility of supplying our key man Cliff Morgan with the ball.' It was a challenge that Lloyd Williams proved equal to. Though six points down early in the match and the Newport back row hounding Cliff at every turn, Cardiff recovered firstly through Lloyd's break that gave Eddie Thomas a try and then another swift pass from him allowed Cliff to put Gordon Wells over for a second score. With both tries converted, Cardiff held on for an unlikely win – and Newport had no use for the champs. Instead reports at the time suggested that 'Cardiff should have collared that bubbly and toasted their young scrum-half.' Cliff Morgan certainly did for as he left the field he put his arms around Lloyd's shoulders and said, 'Thank you – you helped to make this victory possible.'

Less than a year later, Cliff Morgan and Lloyd Williams were running out together at Murrayfield as the Wales' half-backs against Scotland. To complete the happiest of stories it was big brother Bleddyn who gave Lloyd news of that first cap. 'I had just returned from playing for Cardiff in Aberavon and was in the foyer of the Athletic Club when Bleddyn 'phoned JBG Thomas at the Western Mail then came over to me and said 'You're playing for Wales next week'. It was a very emotional moment.' Lloyd was to partner Cliff in his final seven games for Wales but shortly after Cliff retired Lloyd found himself in the international wilderness.

'I didn't play for Wales for two years then one day there was a knock on the door and



there again was Bleddyn – always the bringer of good news. 'You're back in the Welsh team in Paris on Saturday', he said, 'and you're captain !' This time I really did have to sit down.'

**Good scrum halves pass in both directions**

It was hardly surprising that Wales turned to Lloyd Williams for leadership because for two seasons from September 1960 he was an outstanding club captain. He took his team into the ill-fated struggle against the Springboks that year unbeaten after 13 matches and in eight matches against Newport under his leadership the Club won five and drew three. The great landmark, though, was against the Barbarians in 1964 when he reached his 300th First Team appearance and the Club celebrated in style with a magnificent 21 points to three victory. Six weeks later, he took his bow for the final time, with 310 games and another 64 for the Athletic XV to his name.

'In fact,' says Lloyd Williams, 'I once worked out that between us the eight Williams brothers played 1480 games for the Club.' Some record.





# Howard Norris

CARDIFF RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

Charles Howard Norris was prepared to make any sacrifice to play for Cardiff. He would even risk his job in the days when the top players worked by day or night from Monday to Friday, fitted in a couple of training sessions, and then played twice a week on Wednesday evenings and Saturday afternoons.

'When I left St Luke's College, Exeter I started teaching in Cadoxton and was quite happy there until one fateful day I asked if I could leave at three o'clock to join up with the Cardiff team going to London by train for a floodlit match with the Harlequins. I didn't think there'd be a problem because I wasn't teaching a class for the last lesson that day - so I went. Imagine my surprise when I got back to find I had been suspended for four weeks and the full weight of the redoubtable Alderman Llewellyn Heycock, Chairman of the Glamorgan Education Committee, was on my case !'

To cut a long story short, Cadoxton's loss was Llanharan and then Llanharri's gain. For

Howard Norris was a gifted teacher, admired by pupils and colleagues, and a long and successful professional career blossomed. As did his career and reputation with Cardiff Rugby Club as he achieved his life's ambition.

'Let's make no bones about it,' says Howard,

'Cardiff was and is the only club for me. I

was brought up in the Rhondda and Gordon Wells and Kingsley Jones were near-neighbours. Gordon was a star in the Porth County School rugby team when I was still in my first year there, but these fellows were my heroes as well as my friends and gave me a goal to aim for.' And nothing would deter the young Howard Norris. After winning Welsh Secondary School caps in the second row alongside Roddy Evans, and with future Cardiff club-mates Meirion Roberts and Cyril Davies in the centre, Howard went to St Luke's and, true to form, turned down a lucrative job offer in Exeter before returning to South Wales.

'I had played in the Club trials in August 1953, again with Roddy Evans, and got a game with the Rags at Usk before going to college, and then I went into the RAF but I always knew that one day I would try again to get into the team on a regular basis,' admits Howard. That day finally came in September 1958 and he still talks about how he heard of his first selection. 'The Club captain that year was CD Williams and he went out of his way to see me and tell me personally that I was picked for Cardiff - what a wonderful thing to do.' The first game was against Penarth and Howard still remembers the pack he played in that day: 'JD Evans, Billy Thomas and Colin Howe in the front row, Roddy (almost inevitably!) and Peter Goodfellow in the second row, and me packing down with John Nelson and CD in the back row - what a start for me - I was so proud!'

Howard Norris clearly made a big impression because he then played in 34 of the remaining

**Born June 11 1934**  
**413 games in 14 seasons**  
**14 tries**  
**Club Captain 1967-68, 1968-69**  
**Prop forward**  
**2 caps for Wales (1963-66)**  
**British Lions tour to Australia and New Zealand 1966 (3 Tests)**

**...packing down with  
John Nelson and CD  
in the back row -  
what a start for me  
- I was so proud!...**





37 games that season, an exceptional record for a Club debutant. It was a case of beginning as he meant to continue as for the next 12 years he rarely played less than 30 Club games a season ; indeed he thought nothing of playing in 44 of the 49 official games in 1964-65, an incredible achievement for someone who was by then a prop forward.

'Yes,' he says, 'it was a long career, but a happy one. I actually played in all three rows of the scrum before gaining my caps and a Lions tour as a prop and I also had, I think, the unique distinction of playing for Cardiff against four major touring teams, including the Springboks twice.' Such is Howard's commitment to the Club that he still says his Welsh caps and Lions honours pale into insignificance alongside the honour of captaining Cardiff and breaking the career appearance record.

'Of course it was wonderful to play for Wales and of course it was a great experience to tour with the Lions in 1966 and be good enough to play in three Tests against the All Blacks. I was also tremendously proud to lead the Barbarians pack against the unbeaten All Blacks at Twickenham in 1967 and we only lost in injury time. There were five Cardiff players - Gerald Davies, Keri Jones, Barry John, Gareth Edwards and myself - in the Baa-baa's team that day and we all wore our Club socks. And yet to be part of the Cardiff set-up for so long, with successive committees made up of ex-players for whom maintaining the Club's reputation and standards was paramount, was the most important thing to me.'

Howard Norris is a caring and generous man, one who will break off from talking about his

own career to extol the virtues of opponents as much as team-mates. Mention Newport and a broad smile will come over his face. 'I have a tremendous affinity with the Black and Ambers. Like us they were inspired by individuals as much as their history. Dai Watkins - a great and lovely man when he wasn't tormenting us, especially Dai Hayward, on the field of play ; Des Greenslade was the best tight-head I ever propped against ; and Bryn Meredith, what

can you say about him - what a hooker! But they almost ruined my life in 1969 when they won the first three games and I was captain. I pleaded with the boys before the fourth match, 'Please, please don't let me down...not me...not the first Cardiff captain to lose to these Black and Amber boys four times' and they didn't let me down - a glorious 9-all draw!'

For his part, Howard Norris never let any one down as he carried the Cardiff flag to the four corners of club rugby in these islands. It was no surprise when he then devoted countless hours to committee work after his retirement. And it was absolutely no surprise to any one when he was a hugely popular choice for the first Hall of Fame.



<b>Cardiff</b> 15. D. GETHIN 14. B. COLES 13. A. D. WILLIAMS 12. D. K. JONES 11. M. RICHARDS 10. B. JOHN 9. G. EDWARDS 1. C. H. NORRIS (Capt.) 2. G. DAVIES 3. R. BEARD 4. L. BAXTER 5. I. ROBINSON 6. E. WILLIAMS 8. A. R. PENDER 7. J. HICKEY Referee: G. WALTERS (Gowerton)	Full Back Right Wing Right Centre Left Centre Left Wing Outside Half Inside Half Forwards	<b>Newport</b> 15. J. ANTHONY 14. S. J. WATKINS 13. K. M. JARRETT 12. I. TAYLOR 11. P. REES 10. From R.H. PHILIPS/T. EVANS 9. G. TREHARNE 8. B. LLEWELLYN 7. V. PERRINS 6. T. DAVIES 5. J. WATKINS 4. W. MORRIS 3. D. HAINES 2. J. JEFFREY 1. K. POOLE
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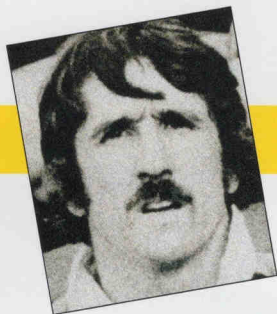
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The team which Howard Norris led Cardiff to a famous draw in 1969



# Gerald Davies

CARDIFF RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

It takes a very special person to captain Cardiff Rugby Club for three consecutive seasons and in modern times Thomas Gerald Reames Davies was the first player to do so. That his predecessor was E Gwyn Nicholls was entirely appropriate as the two of them will one day be part of the same pantheon of the game's immortals. Equally fitting was the fact that Gerald's term of office, as it were, included the Centenary Season of 1976-77, a landmark in the history of the Club and one that everyone realised would need to be celebrated in style as well as achievement. And no one has ever doubted that Gerald Davies had style in abundance.

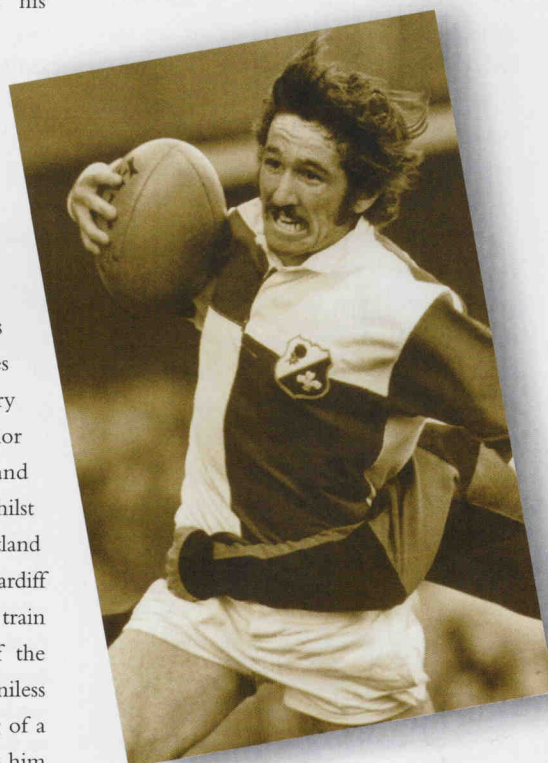
His approach to captaincy is typical of the clarity and vision that he brings to everything he is involved in. 'Initially, I was elected for a one year term as captain, but whatever the future held I realised at the outset that I would have to approach the huge responsibility as if it was a bit longer term. Club captaincy demands a three-year plan: a year of getting to know one another and trying to establish a pattern both on and off the field; a second year when the original plans begin to take shape; and then, hopefully, a third year when everything falls into place. I was fortunate to get the opportunity to carry on for three years and, yes, by the end I really did think we were achieving something in the manner I had hoped.'

There was very little luck involved in what Gerald Davies achieved in those three years as, to a man, those who played under him swear that he was the best captain they ever

had. His positive qualities and ambitions came across in a gentle yet firm way, perhaps typified by his half-time talk in that coruscating cup match at Pontypool in 1978. 'We had been under the cosh for 40 minutes,' recalls Gerald, 'and none of us had hardly touched the ball although I managed to sneak one try. So I simply said 'Well done, we've held them, now when we do get the ball in the second-half let's have the confidence to move it wide and test their defence'. What happened in that second 40 minutes is now part of the cup's folklore as Gerald himself touched the ball three times and duly scored three more of his trademark tries.

Which brings us to Gerald Davies the player. The schoolboy fly-half, first capped as a centre, who went on to become one of the greatest wings, many would say the greatest wing, in the history of the game. 'I had played with future Cardiff team-mates such as Maurice Richards, Keri Jones and Gary Samuel for the Secondary Schools but my first experience of senior rugby was with Llanelli and Loughborough Colleges and it was whilst I was playing for the Colleges in Scotland that the seeds of my future with Cardiff were sown.' Gerald was returning by train from a sevens tournament north of the border when, as he puts it, 'still a penniless student' he was taken under the wing of a generous Cardiff committee who gave him food if not shelter on the long journey home. 'I liked the way they did things and was a little flattered by the interest they showed in me.' Early the following season

**Born February 7 1945**  
**181 games in 8 seasons**  
**74 tries**  
**Club Captain 1975-76, 1976-77, 1977-78**  
**Centre and wing**  
**46 caps for Wales (1966-78)**  
**British Lions tours to South Africa 1968 (1 Test) and Australia and New Zealand 1971 (4 Tests)**







**As Captain in the Centenary year  
there were many functions to attend**

Gerald Davies scored two tries on his debut for the Athletic XV at Bonymaen and a couple of holiday games for the First Team against Watsonians at Christmas and Harlequins at Easter further strengthened his Blue and Black links.

Thirty-six appearances in 1966-67 qualified Gerald Davies for his Cardiff cap in the same season that he played in all five games for Wales, culminating in two individual tries in 'Jarrett's match' against England. 'It was a magical season for me because I found myself playing in the centre alongside my boyhood hero, D Ken Jones, a genius if ever there was one. And when Ken wasn't playing there was Tony Williams who was so good at putting others into space.' Not the least of Gerald's contribution to the Club was the honour he brought it playing for the Barbarians against both the Wallabies and the Springboks and then, with five others - Keri Jones, Maurice Richards, Barry John, Gareth Edwards and John O'Shea - touring South Africa with the Lions.

'I had first gone to South Africa with the Club in 1967 and what a tour that was. Our performance against Eastern Province at Boet Erasmus, when we scored six tries in a 34-9 win, was truly remarkable. Everything seemed to click and as a young back it was a joy to be part of it.'

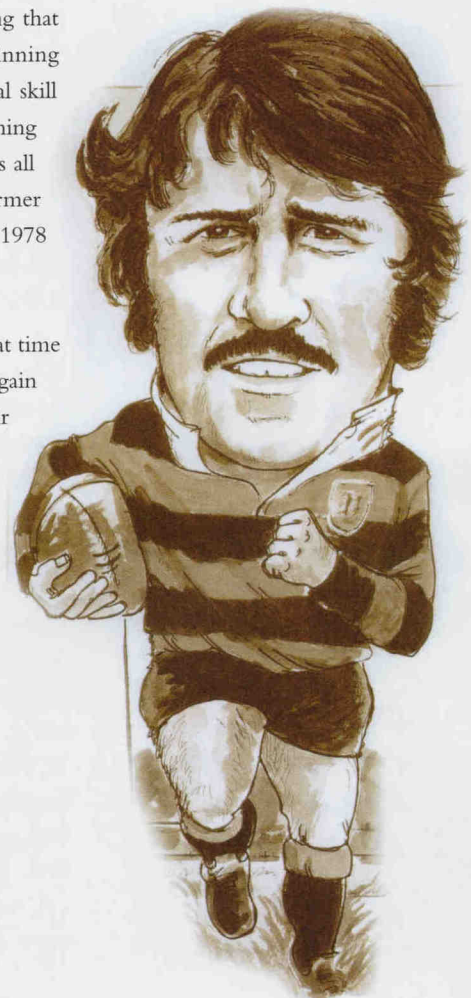
Rugby has never formed all of Gerald Davies' life or ambitions and early in the 1969-70 season he went to Cambridge University to study for a second degree and

thereafter to the magnificent London Welsh side of the early 1970s. By the time he returned to Cardiff in the autumn of 1974 he had found further fame as a deadly finisher and all round footballer for both Wales and the victorious 1971 Lions in New Zealand. But his best years at the Arms Park still lay ahead.

'At the time that I assumed the Club captaincy in 1975, there was a feeling that although the team was still winning matches, a certain flair and individual skill was missing. The crowds were beginning to dwindle so the challenge facing us all was to return the Club to its former glory. I would like to think that by 1978 we had done that.'

All who saw Cardiff play rugby at that time would agree that they did indeed regain their style and elan and that their captain set the greatest of examples. For that, all concerned with the good name of Cardiff Rugby Club owe Gerald Davies a huge debt.

**...not the least of Gerald's  
contribution to the Club was the  
honour he brought it playing for  
the Barbarians against both the  
Wallabies and the Springboks...**





## Gareth Edwards

CARDIFF RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

**G**areth Owen Edwards may or may not be the greatest rugby player of all time but he is certainly one of the most charismatic. Just as Cliff Morgan captured the imagination of the rugby world in the 1950s, so Gareth reached out beyond rugby in the television and video age to a wider audience and was undeniably one of the best advertisements that the great game has ever had. Not only did he transcend national boundaries with his army of admirers, but he also brought rugby union to the notice of those who hitherto had regarded it as a minority sport. And there was no substitute for seeing him 'live', for only then did we appreciate the sheer presence he brought to every game he played in. Running, kicking, passing and a cruel inevitability in his decisive try-scoring were all part of his armoury but, more even than all of that, he was an inspiration to all who played with him and the ultimate challenge to those who played against him.

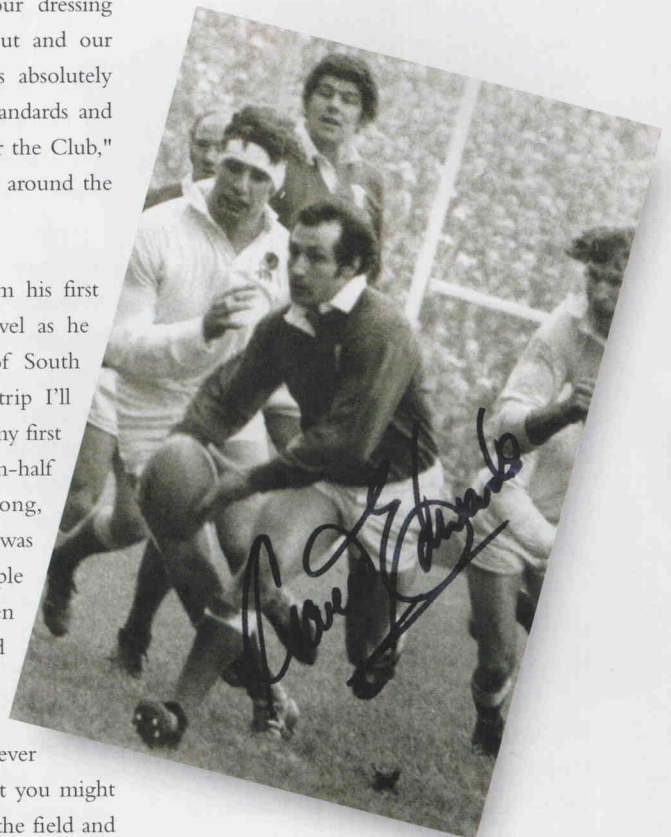
Educated first at Pontardawe Technical School and then Millfield and Cardiff Training College, he followed the traditional path of playing in Cardiff's trials before appearing for Cardiff Athletic at Briton Ferry in September 1966,

marked appropriately with two tries. His first team debut soon followed against Coventry and five months later after only six games for the Club he was playing for Wales in Paris. The rest, as they say, is history.

'Men like Hubert Johnson and Lloyd Williams who were steeped in all-things Cardiff gave me a great welcome when I came to the Club and I was very conscious of the traditions that needed to be upheld – and I was very keen to be part of it. I always remember some time later playing against the Co-optimists at the Arms Park and one of their players noticed in our dressing room that the kit was laid out and our boots cleaned for us. He was absolutely amazed, but those were the standards and care that went with playing for the Club,' says a man who has seen it all around the world of rugby.

It was the Club that gave him his first experience of world-wide travel as he went on the famous tour of South Africa in 1967. 'That was a trip I'll never forget. I had just played my first two games for Wales at scrum-half but our team was so strong, particularly in the backs, that I was more than happy to get a couple of games at full-back! When you've got guys like Howard Norris, Lyn Baxter and the one and only John Hickey with you on tour there was never likely to be a shortage of what you might call 'memorable' moments off the field and on it I was privileged to be part of an

**Born July 12 1947**  
**195 games in 12 seasons**  
**67 tries**  
**Scrum-half**  
**53 caps for Wales (1967-78)**  
**British Lions tours to South Africa 1968**  
**(2 Tests), Australia and New Zealand**  
**1971 (4 Tests) and South Africa 1974**  
**(4 Tests)**





incredible team performance against Eastern Province.'

Five years later Gareth Edwards went on another Club tour to Rhodesia that was equally memorable. 'This time we had Colin Howe as manager - need I say more?! Seriously, though, we were well coached by Dai Hayward and played superbly to beat the Rhodesian national team 24-6. It was a great advert for Cardiff rugby.'

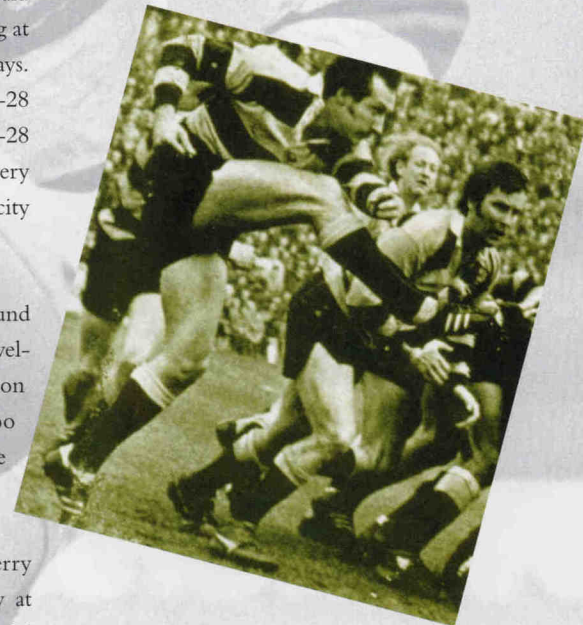
From which it can be concluded that, star of Wales, the Lions, the Barbarians and probably the planet or not, Gareth Edwards took his responsibility to the Club very seriously indeed. He is still proud of the fact that for all his fame and adulation he remained very firmly a one-club man and suggestions that he never played 20 games in a season were wide of the mark with 25 appearances tucked under his belt in 1972-73 and he always wanted the Club to achieve success. 'One of my biggest disappointments was not helping Cardiff to win the Welsh cup. We were well beaten by Llanelli in 1973 and Newport pipped us in 1977 which, being our Centenary Season, was a bitter pill to swallow. Mind you, I was even more disappointed when the Club refused to pay a £50 ransom when I was 'kidnapped' by Swansea students just before a game with Newport! Luckily I was released in time to play on the Saturday. I like to think that if Peter Thomas had been around he'd have paid up !'

Certainly Gareth Edwards was worth his weight in gold to Cardiff. The cup may have eluded him during his illustrious

career but he was never far from famous matches. He partnered Barry John when he dropped those infamous four goals against Llanelli and he was also there when Gerald Davies conjured four tries out of nothing at Pontypool Park. 'Yes, those were great days. I also remember us coming back from 6-28 down against the Barbarians to win 29-28 in the days when those games were very competitive and played in front of capacity crowds.'

He loved playing on the Arms Park ground where, he says, 'the fans were pretty level-headed - they never got too excited but on the other hand they never got too despondent or unfairly critical on the occasional bad day for the team.' Superstar or not, Gareth also valued the presence of great Club players, 'Gerry Wallace made me laugh uncontrollably at times, Tony Williams was a wonderful encourager of young players, and men like Baxter and Carl Smith, Mervyn John and John Hickey, Gary Davies and Billy Thomas were the backbone of any successful side. Why some of them never played for Wales I'll never know.'

'I will always be indebted to Cardiff because the Club taught me a valuable lesson - to treat everyone as equals, just as they did themselves,' concludes Gareth Edwards, and for him being elected to the Cardiff Hall of Fame means as much as all the other accolades he has received from sporting bodies wherever rugby is played.







## Barry John

CARDIFF RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

Barry John may have been a star fly-half from West Wales and he may already have played for his country at Cardiff Arms Park but, like everyone else with Blue and Black aspirations, he would first have to prove himself in a Cardiff pre-season trial match. He was quite happy about that, but no one had warned him about PL Jones.

'I was already known as a bit of a laid-back character', says Barry, 'but I took the Club trial match seriously enough and all was going well until I was covering in defence and suddenly saw what appeared to be raging buffalo galloping towards me - a huge, barrel-chested body on comparatively thin legs - with the ball tucked under one arm. No problem, I thought, he's near the touchline so I'll just push him out of play. Next thing I knew I was in a heap with a badly bruised shoulder

whilst the buffalo was disappearing over the horizon to the distant try-line. Welcome to Cardiff!'

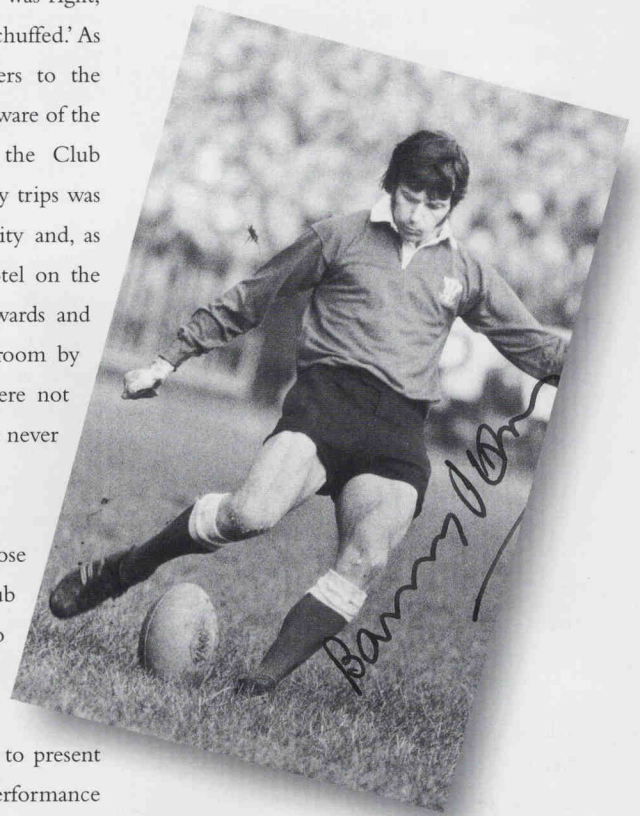
Barry John quickly realised that PL Jones, a no-nonsense wing who terrorised opposing defences wherever club rugby was played, was just one of many

characters at the Cardiff club. 'The great thing about Cardiff then,' he says, 'is that it was not just a case of playing with the international superstars like Gerald and Gareth. What made the team tick week-in, week-out were wonderful forwards like Roger Beard and Gerry Wallace, Lyn Baxter, Ian Robinson, John Hickey and all the rest.'

It was obviously a wrench to leave Llanelli but, as he now puts it, 'the time was right, and anyway my Dad was dead chuffed.' As with so many other newcomers to the Cardiff set-up he soon became aware of the style and the standards that the Club demanded. 'One of my first away trips was to play against Oxford University and, as always, we stayed in a good hotel on the Friday evening but Gareth Edwards and myself were sent back to our room by Hubert Johnson because we were not dressed properly for dinner - we never made that mistake again.'

It didn't take Barry long to impose a bit of his own style on the Club and the catalogue of virtuoso performances multiplied. The four dropped goals against the Scarlets was a cruel calling card to present to his old club but a brilliant performance nevertheless. 'One of my brothers, Clive, was opposing me in their back row and the other, Alan, was sitting in the stand near the comedian Dave Allen. After I had dropped

**Born January 6 1945**  
**93 games in 5 seasons**  
**24 tries**  
**Fly-half**  
**25 caps for Wales (1966-72)**  
**British Lions tours to South Africa 1968**  
**(1 Test) and Australia and New Zealand**  
**1971 (4 Tests)**





**...in a mere 93 games for the Club he had amassed a phenomenal 24 tries and 30 dropped goals and created countless chances for those around him...**

the second goal, Alan turned to Dave and said, 'I'd have killed the little b----- by now!'

Appropriately for a player who was always inclined to do the unexpected, Barry John made history quite early on in his Blue and Black days when he played against Swansea at the old Arms Park ground as he puts it 'wired and miked up to give a running commentary of what was happening. I don't think Morrie Evans and his team believed me when I went in to the Swansea dressing room before the game and sought their approval for what I had taped around my chest. Because it was battery-driven, the mike would only last 20 minutes so after about 19 of them I decided it was time for a try. The All Whites' full-back Roger Blyth wasn't at all amused when the score was duly delivered for the benefit of the HTV cameras!'

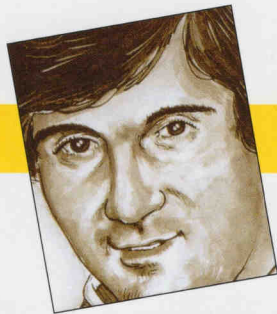
One regret that Barry still has about his five seasons at Cardiff is that he never went on a Club tour overseas. He arrived just after the trip to South Africa in the spring of 1967 and announced his retirement to a stunned rugby world just days before the Club went on its next tour to Rhodesia in 1972. He was only 27 and the debate still rages as to whether he had called it a day far too soon.

By then, though, he probably had nothing left to prove. Idolised as King John with the

1971 Lions and unbeaten in his last two seasons for Wales, he had also left an indelible mark with Cardiff. In a mere 93 games for the Club he had amassed a phenomenal 24 tries and 30 dropped goals and created countless chances for those around him. One of his final games for Cardiff was against the Barbarians in a packed Arms Park on Easter Saturday. 'It summed up all that was best about rugby,' is his clear recollection. 'The Baa-baas had Pierre Villepreux running beautiful angles from full-back and we attacked them from everywhere to run up a record score of 43 points. It was my last club game at the Arms Park.'

Three weeks later, there was one final flourish before the king abdicated. In the last moment of his last match at the neighbouring National Stadium, held to celebrate the Urdd young people's movement in Wales, he turned to pick up a pass behind his back and then weaved past the some of the finest players of his generation for a remarkable individual try. It was a fitting finale to a brilliant career.





# Gareth Davies

CARDIFF RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

**G**areth Davies will tell you that he was a lucky man. When he arrived at Cardiff his scrum-half partner was Gareth Edwards, then at the height of his powers. Later Brynmor Williams made such an impression that WG Davies and DB Williams were the young understudies to the legendary Bennett and Edwards half-back combination throughout the 1976 Five Nations Championship. And then a third partner appeared on the scene, Terry Holmes, chalk to Davies' cheese in background and physique but ultimately to prove the perfect foil for Gareth's silky skills.

But William Gareth Davies did not need much luck to play himself into the history of Cardiff Rugby Club. Carwyn James had described him as an 'Oxford fly-half' measured and controlled in all his play and initial sightings reminded onlookers of Barry John : a languid style concealing a lethal kicking ability and decisive breaks against defences lulled in to a false sense of security. Like his predecessor Gareth played first for Llanelli and like Barry also he knew soon enough that Cardiff was the place for him.

'As a rugby club Cardiff had an aura about it that few could even begin to match. It had by far the strongest fixture list in the days before league rugby and it had a back-up team second to none, so I very much wanted to be part of it,' he says.

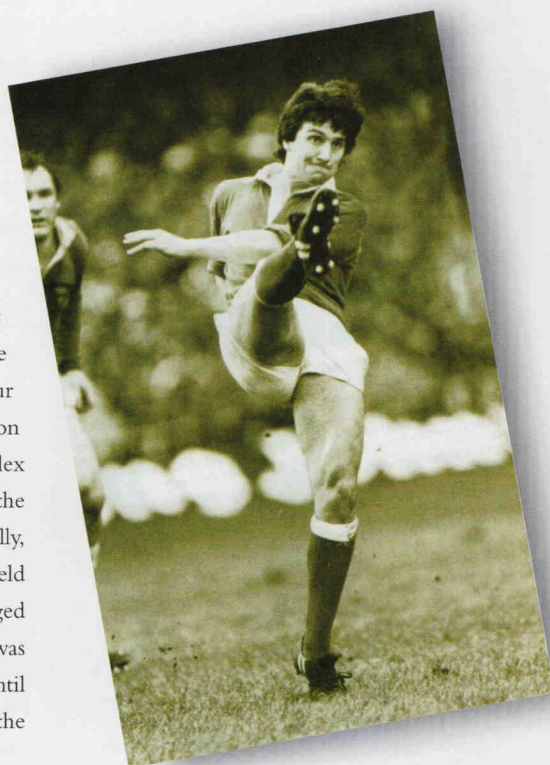
Like many other young players new to the Club Gareth Davies has fond memories of

his early away trips. 'We were going up to Pontypool for a midweek match. I was just turned 20 and Terry Holmes was barely 18 and playing only his second game. One of the old guard was that great, gnarled prop Mike Knill and he turned to me on the team bus and said, 'Have you been up here before, sonny - you look after yourself now!' It went as well as I could have expected as I dropped two goals and kicked two penalties in our 16 points win.'

In later years other games with Pontypool were to hold special memories, whether it was the thousands packed in to the Arms Park for another floodlight spectacular, a mighty tussle between Holmes and the abrasive Chris Huish, or a sublime performance by the whole team in a cup semi-final win over them at Newport. The Welsh Cup was to be the centre of much of Gareth Davies' greatest achievements at the Club. 'For too long we were underachievers in the cup. In our Centenary Year we really turned it on against Llanelli, winning 25-15 with Alex Finlayson outplaying Ray Gravell in the centre. That was the same day, incidentally, that my home village of Tumble held Newport to a draw, but then we managed to lose the final to Newport. It was becoming a bit of an issue in the Club until we developed our exceptional team of the early Eighties.'

Gareth still waxes lyrical about the qualities of the team of that era. There seemed to be strength in every position from Paul Rees

**Born September 29 1955**  
**326 games in 11 seasons**  
**2753 points**  
**Club Captain 1979-80**  
**Fly-half**  
**21 caps for Wales (1978-85)**  
**British Lions tour to South Africa 1980 (1 Test)**





**...in our Centenary Year we really turned it on against Llanelli, winning 25-15 with Alex Finlayson outplaying Ray Gravell in the centre...**

at full-back to a front row of Jeff Whitefoot, Alan Phillips and Ian Eidman that was as formidable as anything seen since the Pontypool front row of the previous decade. 'Alun Donovan was a good organiser in midfield, the presence of John Scott was crucial up front, and Bob Lakin was one of the greatest servants this Club has ever seen - an unsung hero if ever there was one.'

Gareth himself had contributed one of the definitive displays of fly-half generalship for the Club against the 1984 Wallabies, a personal triumph of kicking out of the hand that attracted plaudits from far and wide, and a notable double after his part in another win over the Wallabies back in 1975.

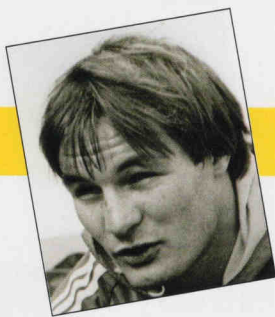
Having waited so long, Cardiff triumphed in the Welsh Cup five times in seven finals between 1981 and 1987 and were only beaten by a last minute dropped goal by Llanelli's Gary Pearce in a sixth. Davies and Holmes were the half-backs in four of those finals before Terry went to rugby league and Gareth played on with great clubmen like Neil O'Brien and Steve Cannon. In the best traditions of mercurial fly-halves he often found himself at the centre of animated discussions about his worth to the Welsh team and, also in the best traditions, he returned to the number ten shirt twice after being dropped and also captained Wales five times.

Being replaced by Gary Pearce or Malcolm Dacey was one thing, but being left out

after three matches in 1985 in favour of 'A N Other' was a step too far for a proud man, even when the anonymous choice eventually materialised as a young Jonathan Davies. So Gareth Davies took his bow from international rugby in 1985 and gave his final endeavours to a grateful Cardiff Club. As his career came to an end the victories continued, another touring team scalp in Fiji, a triumphant cup campaign culminating in a final victory over Newport that lay to rest the ghosts of defeat in 1977, and then the happiest of club tours to Canada. His last game was against Alberta in June 1986 by which time he had long since established a record points total for a career, and one that still stands over ten years later.

But for Gareth Davies rugby in Cardiff was and is about far more than accumulating points. 'For me and many others Cardiff Rugby Club provided the challenge of the bigger stage,' is his conclusion. 'Some choose to turn away from that challenge - but I have absolutely no regrets that I came here and, I like to think, contributed something to a great club.' Everyone who saw Gareth in his pomp has no doubt whatsoever that he made the right decision and that it was one from which we all benefited.





## Terry Holmes

CARDIFF RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

In every rugby club there are players who through a combination of factors, whether commitment, loyalty, innate ability, courage or simply their background, touch the hearts of both the most fervent and the most occasional supporters. Such a man was Terry Holmes. In his time at Cardiff Arms Park he showed not just some but all of these qualities and many more. He commanded a respect and an admiration that few have equalled in modern times and even when he left Wales in 1985 to try his luck at rugby league he went with the best wishes of the entire rugby community of the city ringing in his ears.

But the Terry Holmes story started more than ten years before that. He had already played for Cardiff Schools at under-11 and under-14 levels and played for Wales Schools at Twickenham when still at Bishop Hannan School before he graduated to Cardiff Youth and further junior international honours.

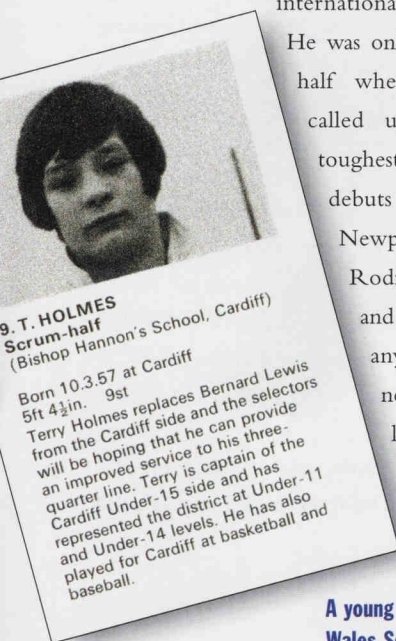
He was only 17 and a half when he was called up for the toughest of senior debuts against Newport at Rodney Parade and it didn't get any easier nearly a year later when his second match was

at Pontypool Park.

But from the very beginning it was obvious that the young Holmes was a bit special. In 1974 Gareth Edwards was still playing and would be there for another four years. Brynmor Williams was also knocking on the door, but Terry was a bit different to both of them. Bigger for a start. At six foot one inch and comfortably in excess of 13 stones he offered a physical threat rarely seen at the base of the scrum. He was much more, though, than a big hulk and as the years went by his all round ball skills became more apparent. Under the high ball he was immense and his tackling became legendary. With a smile on his face Terry still claims that his partnership with Gareth Davies was so effective because 'He did the kicking and I did the tackling!' In one international at Murrayfield he made over a dozen shuddering tackles as the Scots tried everything to break down the Welsh defence. They didn't and Wales won.

Terry Holmes also became a great reader of the game. He captained both his club and his country and nothing personified his astuteness more than a game at Leicester two weeks before he went north. 'We were controlling the first half but had some inexperienced backs who were failing to get anywhere against guys like Paul Dodge and Dusty Hare. So at half-time we decided to turn it into a nine-man game. With

**Born March 10 1957**  
**193 games in 10 seasons**  
**123 tries**  
**Club Captain 1984-85**  
**Scrum-half**  
**25 caps for Wales (1978-85)**  
**British Lions tours to South Africa 1980 and New Zealand 1983 (1 Test)**



**T. HOLMES**  
**Scrum-half**  
 (Bishop Hannan's School, Cardiff)  
 Born 10.3.57 at Cardiff  
 5ft 4½in. 9st  
 Terry Holmes replaces Bernard Lewis from the Cardiff side and the selectors will be hoping that he can provide an improved service to his three-quarter line. Terry is captain of the Cardiff Under-15 side and has represented the district at Under-11 and Under-14 levels. He has also played for Cardiff at basketball and baseball.



### Holmes to Davies yet again...

Whitefoot, Alan Phillips and Eidman in the front row, Bobby Norster controlling the line-outs, and Bob Lakin and Mike Teague at the back we fancied our chances – and it worked a treat. Our backs didn't see the ball for 40 minutes but we got three tries, including two by me from short range scrums which Dean Richards didn't like one little bit!

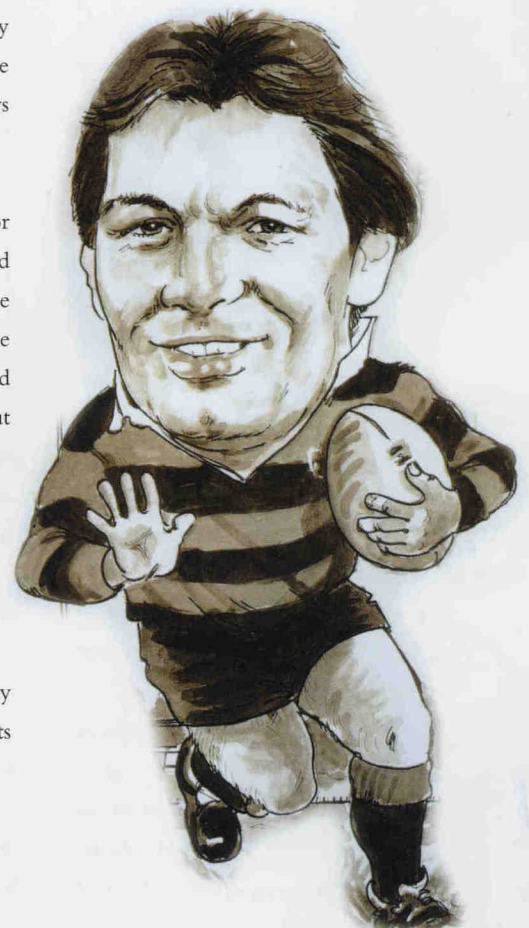
The inevitability of unstoppable tries from short range became one of Terry Holmes' trademarks. Opponents at all levels, whether in club or international rugby, seemed helpless against his power and his strike rate of 123 touchdowns in less than 200 games speaks for itself. And all the time Terry was developing as a player, he was maturing rapidly off the field. After his retirement he was to write, 'Only now, much later and I hope a little wiser, do I fully realise and appreciate what it meant to me to join Cardiff and how much it influenced me...I was given guidance and a sense of purpose ; and in a sense the many gaps in my education were filled by mingling with and listening to the people who made the club such a vibrant, compelling place – players, officials, ground staff and supporters.'

There is little doubt that Terry Holmes was close to all things Cardiff and, as he said at the time, 'The only way I could give anything back to Cardiff was to do my best on the field.' Which is what he certainly did

as by the early Eighties the formidable team built around himself, Gareth Davies, John Scott, Bob Norster, Alan Phillips and Alun

Donovan – but somehow in total much bigger than its constituent parts – took shape. 'Playing in that team at that time was as good as it gets,' he still believes. 'We were a team on and off the field with a huge respect for one another. There were many strong personalities amongst us but the good of the team and of the Club always came first.'

Terry Holmes signed professional forms for Swinton when he was captain of Wales and at the height of his powers but no one begrudged him a penny of what he received. Well-wishers from the city and beyond drove north to see his league debut but he was to be bedevilled by the injuries that had occasionally interrupted his earlier career and cost him several caps and glory with the Lions overseas. But at Cardiff Rugby Club no one questioned that he was one of the Club's greatest players: he was a son of the city who rose to the top and his entry into its Hall of Fame was never in doubt.





# Alan Phillips

CARDIFF RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

Alan Phillips is in the Hall of Fame not because of his record number of appearances over 14 seasons or even because of his incredible try-scoring ability as a hooker. It is more a recognition of his superb all round ability as a hooker, acknowledged by the Welsh selectors when he succeeded Bobby Windsor in the national team and for the Lions, and also his remarkable durability, as witnessed by his recall to a successful World Cup squad in 1987 five years after his international career had ended.

Alan was a whipper-snapper of a hooker, born to the position. 'People talk these days about converting props and other forwards into hookers - France even tried it with a flanker a few years ago - but hookers can't be manufactured like that. Playing at hooker is almost a vocation, a calling. You have to beaver away, get under people's skins, do the business in tight and loose,' is his firm belief.

And Alan himself was a natural number two, even though he will remind you that he played the occasional game at centre for the Club!

As befits one of the great characters of the Club, he has a fund of

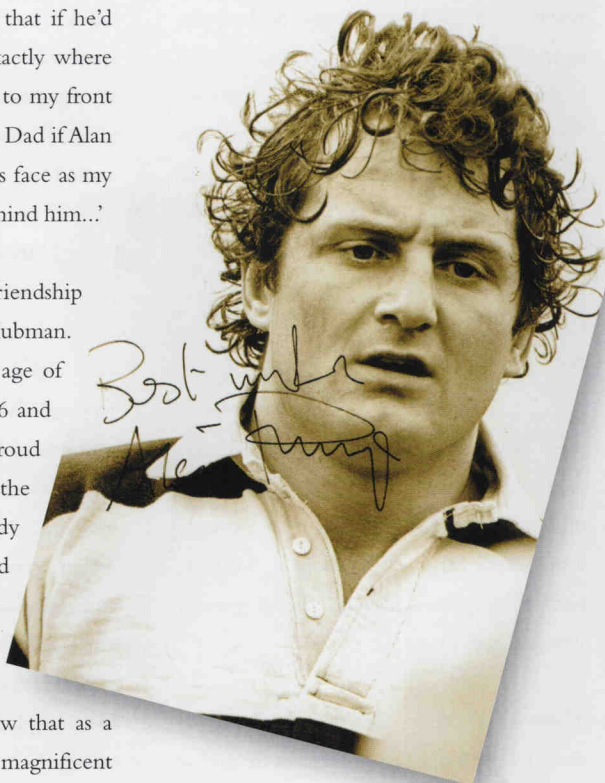
stories, not all printable. One that relates how he was first recruited into the Blue and Black cause. 'I had been playing for Cornelly Youth in the Bridgend Sevens and apparently one or two Cardiff officials had seen me and were impressed. Anyway, a day or so later I was walking down the road in Kenfig Hill after training at the local club when a car pulls up alongside me and a bloke who later turned out to be the Cardiff hooker and committeeman Gary Davies wound down the window and asked me if I knew where Alan Phillips lived. Feeling a bit knackered I said that if he'd give me a lift, I'd show him exactly where Alan lived. So he drives me up to my front door, rings the bell and asks my Dad if Alan Phillips was in. I can still see his face as my Dad told him I was standing behind him...'

It was the start of a beautiful friendship between Club and supreme Clubman.

'I played for Cardiff from the age of 18 and a half to when I was 36 and it's an achievement I'm very proud of. My local club gave me the thumbs up because everybody acknowledged that to be asked to join Cardiff was an honour in itself. I did get the feeling that the team may have been underachieving but I also knew that as a young player I was joining a magnificent front-row.'

When he arrived, Alan Phillips found Mike Knill at tight-head prop and for him Mike

**Born August 21 1954**  
**481 games in 15 seasons**  
**130 tries**  
**Club Captain 1985-86, 1986-87**  
**Hooker**  
**18 caps for Wales (1979-87)**  
**British Lion tour to South Africa 1980**





**...Alan Phillips the captain really did regard them as a challenge that should not be taken lightly...**

was the best scrummager he ever played with. Fellow new recruits such as Mark McJennett and Brynmor Williams also settled in fast as they all came under the wing of men like Malcolm Collins, Alun Priday and Maldwyn James. 'They were strict but fair, and everybody was treated as equals.' Having made his first team debut at centre against Paignton, he won his Athletic XV cap in 1973-74 and his First XV cap the following year, by which time he had taken over from Gary Davies. 'I was lucky to have Gary as a mentor as he was one of the most respected club men and hookers I ever encountered - even if he didn't recognise me when we first met!'

Alan also recognises the part played by Gerald Davies between 1975 and 1978 in setting new standards. 'Gerald was the best captain I ever played under, an inspiring player who was not a ranter and raver, and it was under him that our great team of later years began to take shape.' Like some of his contemporaries and fellow Hall of famers, Alan has no doubt that the Cardiff teams between 1980 and 1986 were the best that he played in over a sustained period. 'We had decision-makers through the spine of the team and some of the best players I ever came across in their positions. What can you say about a pack that had Eidman and Whitefoot at prop, Norster at lock and John Scott at number eight?' He is also unflinching in his admiration for Bob Lakin, Paul Rees and, of course, Terry



Holmes and Gareth Davies at half-back. 'Sometimes I don't think we get the credit we deserve for what we achieved in those years. We were a formidable outfit by any standards.'

There was, though, no shortage of hard matches. Pontypool was always a challenge and like so many Cardiff teams over the years even Alan Phillips and company found Bridgend hard to beat. Cup victories came and went and at the end of every season there was the unique challenge of the Barbarians. And Alan Phillips the captain really did regard them as a challenge that should not be taken lightly. 'I was once asked to explain why in a so-called exhibition match I ordered Gareth Davies to take a kick at goal in the moments when we had already established a big lead. It was a clear decision as far as I was concerned : get the three points and we would be the first Cardiff team to pass 50 points against the Baa-baas. In other words, more glory for Cardiff.'

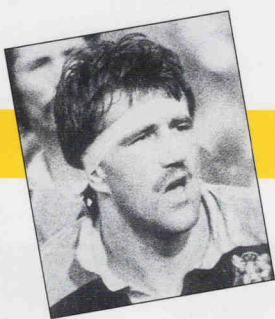
In short, whilst loyal to his Kenfig Hill roots, Alan Phillips is to this day a Blue and Black through and through and for him being in the Hall of Fame is the greatest of honours.

**Alan Phillips in the thick of things**



**The proud Lion in 1980**





## Robert Norster

CARDIFF RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

**B**ob Norster was as good a line-out leaper as the game of rugby has seen in the last 20 years. In an age when the jumpers came increasingly to rely on the lifting and support of others he was a throwback to an earlier age, asking nothing more than a bit of space to operate in and a hooker who could throw the ball in accurately. At international level he was unfortunate in that his first cap coincided with Cardiff team mate's Alan Phillips' last appearance for five years. 'Bob liked my throwing in', says Phillips, 'but the trouble was I'd get the first eight spot on and if I then 'missed him' with number nine I'd have earache about it for days - seriously, though, he really was the best in the business.'

At international level Bob Norster had absolutely no trouble in dominating every opponent he came up against as successive

England locks like

Nigel Redman,

Steve

Bainbridge

and

particularly

Wade Dooley

learnt to their

cost. At six

foot five

inches he

was by no

means the

biggest lock around



but his natural ability and timing helped him to reign supreme. At club level his regular supply of the ball was taken for granted from the moment he joined Cardiff.

'After school in Nantyglo I played for Abertillery at youth and senior level and was invited to join the Wales squad in 1977.

This was a great honour for me and set me thinking about what I hoped to achieve in rugby. Pontypool and Newport had shown an interest in me but, thanks to Malcolm Collins, I came to Cardiff in September 1978. I was barely 21 and there was a lot to be impressed by. What struck me immediately was that the club was so cosmopolitan. We had Michel van de Loos, a Dutchman, and Hans de Goede, a French Canadian, in the second row. The captain was an Englishman, Barry Nelmes and Mike Teague and John Scott were there as well. Even our vice-captain, a certain Gareth Davies, was known as 'Majid' !'

It was less of a culture shock than Bob Norster perhaps pretends, for he has always been one to balance his sporting commitments with the wider world outside. A graduate of Cardiff University, he was and still is always keen to accommodate his rugby within his wider professional career. 'I loved the attention to detail that was evident everywhere in the Club. Our kit

**Born June 23 1957**  
**253 games in 11 seasons**  
**22 tries**  
**Club Captain 1987-88, 1988-89**  
**Lock**  
**34 caps for Wales (1982-89)**  
**British Lions tours to New Zealand 1983 (2 Tests) and Australia (1 Test)**



Plenty to celebrate in the early 80's



was personalised and clear standards and expectations were set. These were lessons that I have tried to follow throughout my career in management in the years since.'

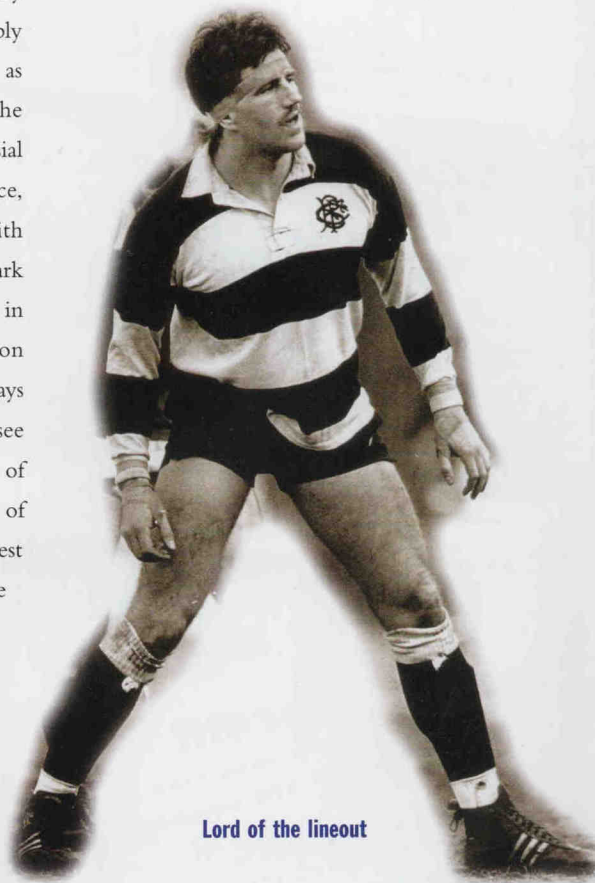
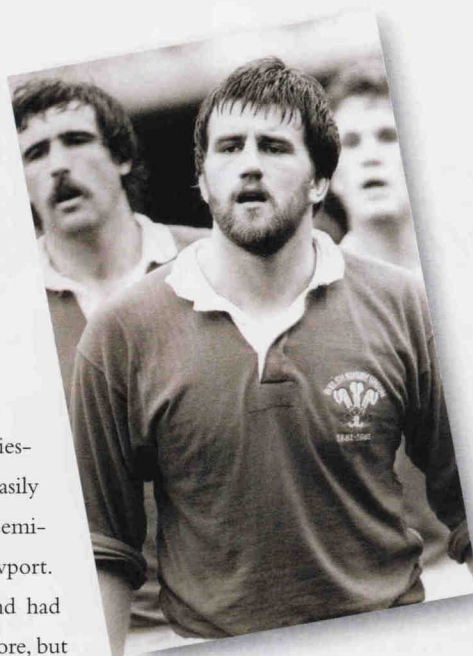
Of course as in any rugby team matters could not be allowed to be taken too seriously all the time. Much fun was had with the Lane brothers, Roger and Stuart, also products of the Gwent Valleys, with Mike Murphy and Carl Smith, and with fellow lock, 'Heavy Kev' Edwards. 'Then there was Mike Knill,' says Bob, joining a long line of admirers of the redoubtable tight-head. 'He was seemingly cuboid in shape and packing behind him was like pushing behind a sofa. For me he was a father-figure in the team and one for whom I have the greatest admiration.'

Bob has clear memories of special games and performances, like the one against Western Province in Newlands in 1979 when he came up against the great Springbok Morne du Plessis, or the tour of Zimbabwe two years later which he felt reflected a great unity of purpose by all involved and which confirmed the team's development at that time. 'These were all staging posts in the emergence of the great Club team of the early Eighties, one I was proud to be a part of.'

Bob Norster was another part of the celebrated spine of that team stretching from Alan Phillips and himself to John Scott

in the back row and the Davies-Holmes axis behind. 'I won't easily forget displays like the 24-3 cup semi-final defeat of Pontypool at Newport. They were the cup favourites and had thrashed us a couple of weeks before, but that was the day when all our years of preparation bore fruit. Kevin Edwards was magnificent alongside me and with Owen Golding, Scottie and Gareth Roberts forming a terrific back row, Gareth and Terry had a field day at half-back.'

Though Cardiff were to lose the final to the infamous injury-time dropped goal by Gary Pearce Cardiff were unquestionably the cup kings of the Eighties as much as Robert Norster was the Lord of the Lineout. Dark days like the controversial sending-off against South Wales Police, courtesy of a disagreement with international rival Steve Sutton, or dark mysteries like the missing kit on tour in Thailand - yes, Thailand - are soon forgotten in the big picture. Bob was always one to keep things in perspective and to see the wider scheme of things. But he's sure of one thing : for him, entry into the Hall of Fame is right up there with his greatest achievements inside and outside the game.



**Lord of the lineout**



## Cardiff v New Zealand '53

CARDIFF RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

It is a game and a performance written in gold in the proud history of Cardiff Rugby. The headlines and telegrams from around the world speak for themselves. And every year since the surviving members of the Cardiff XV meet to remember both their achievement and their team mates who are no longer with them.

This evening we congratulate their captain Bladdyn Williams and his heroes from 1953 : Gareth Griffiths, Gwyn Rowlands, Cliff Morgan, Rex Willis, Geoff Beckingham, Eddie Thomas, Derek Williams and John Nelson.

CARDIFF RUGBY FOOTBALL TEAM  
THAT BEAT NEW ZEALAND RUGBY FOOTBALL TEAM  
at Cardiff Arms Park, 21st November, 1953



Back Row: G. GRIFFITHS, J. E. LLEWELLYN, E. THOMAS, M. COLLINS, J. D. NELSON, J. D. EVANS  
Front Row: C. D. WILLIAMS, A. D. S. BOWES, R. WILLIS, S. JUDD, B. L. WILLIAMS (Captain), C. MORGAN, A. THOMAS, G. ROWLANDS, G. BECKINGHAM

Welcome, All Blacks!



NEW ZEALAND RUGBY FOOTBALL TOUR 1953-1954  
7 HAYMARKET LONDON, S.W.1  
24th. November, 1953.  
T. H. HAMER & CO. LTD.  
TELEPHONE: WHITEHALL 8851  
TELEGRAMS: RUGBYFOOT, LONDON

DEAR HUBERT,  
Hubert Johnson Esq.,  
Chairman,  
Cardiff Rugby Football Club,  
Cardiff Arms Park,  
CARDIFF.

Dear Hubert,  
May I, on behalf of the Four Home Rugby Unions, thank you and the officials of the Cardiff Club for the grand welcome and game you gave to the All Blacks Team on Saturday last. I think you will know by now that although our boys were beaten, they thoroughly enjoyed the game, and greatly appreciated the manner in which the victory of the Cardiff side was gained. I am sure that we shall not meet a side playing a better brand of Rugby Football during the whole tour, and certainly not a side with as great a team spirit.

It was a great pleasure for me personally to meet the officials and players of the Cardiff Club once again and spend the evening in the Club Room. You must be very proud of the Club for the two grand exhibitions of Rugby against the last two Touring Sides; perhaps it is a pity that the All Blacks cannot leave a trophy such as the Springboks gave to you. I hope that we all will see much more of you during the tour and if I can be of any assistance please do not hesitate to let me know.

Yours sincerely,

*Philip Smith*

CARDIFF RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

DINNER



New Zealand  
v  
Cardiff  
CARDIFF ARMS PARK  
Saturday, 21st November  
1953  
Kick-off 2.45 p.m.

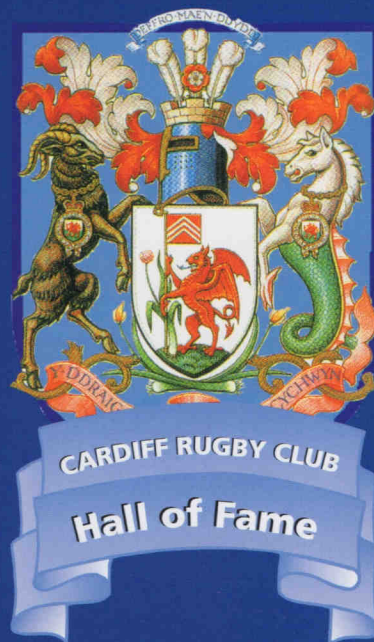
Official Programme - Price 6d.



# *Autographs*



# Cardiff Rugby Football Club



# HALL *of* FAME