

But to our successes. We beat Maesteg by the club's record score of 77 points to 9. Maesteg's blazer badge represents a legend of four 7's, sad for Maesteg, Cardiff inflicted on them no less than eleven 7's to make up 77 points. Newport were beaten three times, the Harlequins (A) were beaten 47-8, Cambridge University (A) 36-10 with a weak team, and Pontypool 37 points to ten. In the W.R.U. Challenge Cup we reached the final to play Llanelli, having defeated South Wales Police, Mountain Ash, Ebbw Vale, Blaina and in the semi-final Swansea—at Aberavon. We were more than held in scrummaging, where we were expected to be the stronger. Bennett destroyed us, kicking magnificently all seven kicks at goal. True, our hooker, Garry Davies had fractured a bone at the top of his spine, but Llanelli were far the superior team on the day and Cardiff congratulated them in their great centenary season. A week later, Llanelli beat us in the second round of the Welsh (Snelling) Sevens, by 22 points to 18 in extra time. They beat Newbridge in the final by a record score 52 points to six.

In this season, John Davies created a new points scoring record of 209, made up of four tries and 81 goals, surpassing the record of 199 jointly held by Norman Biggs 1893-94 and Dennis Gethin 1968-69. Steve McCann scored 21 tries—four against Maesteg, Alec Finlayson 20—four against the Harlequins, Mervyn John and Roger Lane each scored 16 tries—a record number for forwards. Gareth Edwards scored 13 and kicked three goals in 25 matches. Keith James and the starlet Leighton Davies gained First XV caps. Four players were selected for Wales "B" against France "B", Alec Finlayson, Roger Lane, Ian Robinson and Keith James who turned in a brilliant performance at stand-off half back; Wales "B" won 35 points to six.

Cardiff Athletic XV P38, W33, L5. Points 1,165—400. "Tony" Williams was captain, well worthy of the honour. This versatile outside-half learned his Rugby at Taffs Well School and at Christ College, Brecon. He had already played in 315 games for the 1st XV since his debut in 1959-60. He was a great leader, a real driver, with skill and courageous example. At "sevens" he had proved himself as Cardiff's captain and tactician. In his splendid season his team was the first to score more than 1,000 points, four points for a try of course. Even so, his team scored more than 40 points in no less than eleven matches, including a points record for the club of 93 to nine over the unfortunate Tonyrefail Club in the opening match of the season at Sophia Gardens. What a spur to other successes, a 74 points to 12 win over St. Davids, Pems. (A), Llantwit Major beaten 70-13 at Sophia Gardens, Old Illydians (A) 69-12, Risca (A) 66-4, Milford Haven (A) 62-12, Llanelli Wanderers (S.G.) 54-10 and 52-14 (A), Harlequin Wanderers (S.G.) 52-15, Ebbw Vale Athletic (S.G.) 44-12 and Newport Utd. (S.G.) 41-0. I doubt whether any club of comparable standing has ever scored 228 points in its initial three matches as did Tony's team against Tylorstown, Old Illydians and Risca. The scoring was fantastic, unparalleled. Seventy-eight players were called upon and 53 took part in the scoring.

Those with most tries were P. Lyn Jones 22, Elwyn Williams 14, the captain, John Uzzell and John H. James 11 each and Gareth Lewis 10. Tries and goals brought Leighton Davies 100 points as well as 86 with the 1st XV. P. Lyn Jones amassed 122 points and the useful looking full-back Phil Jenkins scored 93. Four of Tony's "Rags" gained Athletic XV caps, Will Attwill, Jeff Jenkins, Don Llewellyn and the young hooker John Thomas. One of the Athletic players Simon Davies who assisted on four occasions was awarded his Oxford Blue.

Cardiff Juniors record was P22, W18, L4, points 735—133; their captain was Sean Grey who led quite a youthful team, channelled largely from Cardiff's successful schools of the previous season. They played splendid Rugby to score 135 tries to their opponents' ten. Centre Gordon Pritchard scored 18, flanker Tony Brahim 14 and Tony De Bono 14. Wayne Peckham the young flanker gained his international Youth cap, as did Pritchard and De Bono. The Juniors won the Cardiff & District "Sevens", ten of them were supplied to that Youth body during the season and Gordon Pritchard was selected as its Player of the Year. They made their first overseas tour, financed largely by themselves, to Belgium where they defeated Avis Youth 56-3, and a Belgium Selection 38-0. The chairman of the Belgium Rugby Federation was most pleased, and remarked, "Never before had they in Belgium seen Rugby played so well at any level". Praise indeed for the Cardiff Juniors.

Three diverse events must be mentioned. Hubert Johnson decided not to stand for re-election to the Rugby committee. My statistical record of officers and committee down the years indicates the long and almost uninterrupted period of service to the Rugby Club. He was awarded an official blazer in recognition of three seasons of captaincy of the Athletic XV. He has already served the management committee of the Cardiff Athletic well and it is good to know that his services will not be lost as he is a trustee.

Les Spence another of our long serving players and officials, was nominated to become the President of the Welsh Rugby Union for 1973-74. He was a popular choice and did a good job in his important and high office. For 1973-74 he was succeeded by Harry M. Bowcott whose early years as a player was with the Cardiff Club before business took him to London where he has served the London Welsh as player and administrator. Thus following myself and Les Spence, Cardiff Club has supplied the Welsh Rugby Union with three of its Presidents.

The sad event was the passing of A. T. Thomas after quite a long and painful illness. Popularly known as "Akka", a splendid wing threequarter, he played with distinction in the period 1928-36, subsequently gaining a degree at Aberystwyth, and then serving H.M. Forces as an officer in the Royal Navy during the war. He served on the committee from 1947-48 until he died, although for a number of seasons he reluctantly resigned to take up a post as sports master at Christ College, Brecon, from where he was to predict that one of his Juniors would become a great player—none other than Tony Williams. Another of our former committee men also passed on, Jimmy Lawrence of the 'thirties'; and also three of our old players, Police Sgt. Ernie Marsh, Harold Westlake and Tim O'Brien—'Tim the Devil'. R.I.P.

For Cardiff's floodlight match with Aberavon, Mr. John Pring a New Zealand test referee officiated. Prior to the club's match with the Barbarians at Easter time their President Brigadier H. L. Glyn Hughes with forty years' service, was presented with an inscribed silver ice bucket by our chairman Peter Nyhan on behalf of the Cardiff Club, a nice gesture.

The annual re-union for the players of Cardiff's winning team which beat the All Blacks in 1953-54 was held in Cardiff's castle. Visitors were allowed to attend, on payment, quite a wrong feature for this annual event in my view. Remedial work on the new club ground was proceeding and the W.R.U. kindly allowed our 1st XV to use its national ground during the month of September.

CUSTOMS OFFICER CAPTAIN

"THE RAGS" CAPTURE THE LIMELIGHT

GARETH EDWARDS' RECORDS

1973-74.

The results, including W.R.U. cup matches were P53, W40, L11, D2. Points 1,186—511. Garry Davies the captain joined the club in 1963-64, and subsequently took over the hooking from W. J. "Billy" Thomas. A native of Treherbert, he joined the Civil Service after leaving school becoming a customs officer of the Inland Revenue and for a time was posted to London Airport. He assisted London Welsh and has played many times for the Civil Service R.F.U. in its representative matches. Popular with club and colleagues, Garry gained his first fifteen cap in 1964-65 and had played in more than 200 matches for the 1st XV prior to his year of captaincy, his vice-captain was Alec Finlayson.

Amongst the newcomers were Paul Evans, the P.T. instructor from the Newport Club, an established centre, three most promising forwards in Mark McJennett—son of Ian McJennett who assisted Cardiff during the post war seasons, Trevor Worgan and Alun Phillips from the Llanharan and Pyle Youth teams, and perhaps the find of the season, the scrum half Brynmor Williams who was to show ability of international class.

Cardiff started off the season with a real bang, defeating our French visitors from Cognac by 56 points to nil. Another big win was registered over the Australian team, the

Northern Suburbs of Sydney by 44 points to six, a good win, but a sad day for the club as Ian Robinson was "sent off". Newport, having a bad season, suffered three defeats at our hands, one of them at home under floodlights by 38 points to 14. There were big wins over Bristol 30 points to 3, Pontypridd 34-6, Coventry with a strong team by 36-13 and the Harlequins 33-10. An exciting win by 24 points to 23 at Swansea gave much pleasure to both clubs after some great running Rugby. On the morning of the Wales/Scotland international the Heriots Club were beaten 35-9. There were however, two matches which gave the club most satisfaction. On the morning of the England/Wales international, London Welsh were thrashed by 34 points to four through some great attacking Rugby. The Welsh were without John Dawes and Gerald Davies on duty for Wales, but they still turned out six internationals, Jim Shanklin, Keith Hughes, Jeff Young, T. G. Evans, Mike Roberts and John Taylor. Cardiff were without Gareth Edwards and Ian Robinson on duty at Twickenham.

There was the victory over Bridgend (A) by 21 points to 18, it was in the third round of the W.R.U. Challenge Cup. It was a cracker of a game, Cardiff starting off with a bang, scoring two excellent tries—one involving a run of 75 yards in which six players handled. But Bridgend struck back with three penalty goals from Ian Lewis, then a try and conversion, then a dropped goal which put them into the lead at half time by 18 points to 8. Cardiff pulled back in the second half. P. L. Jones scored a very good try, which was followed by a brilliant solo one from Paul Evans, which, converted by Keith James equalled the scoring. At this stage there was only one side in it, and from a quick heel on the Bridgend twenty-five the ball was fed to Keith James who dropped the goal—suffering a late tackle—to give Cardiff victory by 21 points to 18 shortly before no-side. A great win this.

Bridgend however beat us twice in the season. At home we played a weak team as half the normal side were on duty for East Wales against Australia at Newport, but after being 10 points down at half time, our "reserves" rallied strongly and when an excellent movement brought a try for Wayne Lewis to give Cardiff the lead in the last minute, we thought the Bridgend "jinx" was beaten. But not so. From the drop out, Cardiff was penalised at the maul which followed. A penalty was awarded to Bridgend and it was S. Fenwick's penalty which gave them victory and restored their "jinx". The final whistle blew immediately. Once more we had lost to Bridgend in the very closing stages—this time by 13 points to 11.

Llanelli also defeated Cardiff twice. At Stradey by 26 points to nil in November, and at home by 16 points to four in February. Up to this point in the meetings between our two clubs, Llanelli had never scored more than 20 points against the Blue & Blacks. In the match at Stradey we suffered a couple of injuries, but did not play well enough to contain the better Llanelli team. In Cardiff's programme notes for the home match, Dai Hayward our programme editor recalls receiving Christmas cards from some of his Llanelli friends. The frontispiece showed the scoreboard after the November match: Caerdydd 0, Llanelli 26, and below this, the cryptic words, "The scoreboard tells the story". Naturally, Dai Hayward felt the publishers were gloating somewhat, and mentioned the fact to his good friend R. H. Williams the former Llanelli and British Lions forward who understands West Wales folk, who explained so tactfully, that there was really no sense of exultant gloating at all "but a compliment to Cardiff, an example of what it means to other clubs who succeed in beating them".

In the W.R.U. Cup, Cardiff met Aberavon at Bridgend in the semi-final but played disappointingly and were beaten by a better and more lively team on the day, by nine points to four. We flattered to deceive in the W.R.U. National Sevens in May as we ran up an 18 points lead over Bridgend, whose Seven fought back magnificently in the second half. After Cardiff had the game sewn up as it were, Bridgend, almost on their own line, fastened on a loose ball and ran it out practically the whole length of the field to win in extra time by 22 points to 18. Cardiff's promising new young forward Trevor Worgan was named as the Player of the Tournament.

The leading scorers were Alec Finlayson 31 tries (four in the match against Newport in November under floodlights), P. Lyn Jones 21, Paul Evans 15, Brynmor Williams our

"third scrum half" 13, Mervyn John and Roger Lane, rival scoring forwards, 11 and 12 respectively. Our promising stand-off half Keith James ran up 135 points from five tries and 46 goals, including ten dropped, and John Davies the full-back 108 from three tries and 37 goals. Paul Evans, John Luff, Barry Nelmes and Brynmor Williams were honoured with 1st XV caps. In the international field Alec Finlayson and Ian Robinson gained their first Welsh caps, they had already played for East Wales against Japan, as did Gary Samuel, Mike Knill and Mervyn John.

But it was Gareth Edwards who added further honours to himself and his club, in the international field. He gained his 36th consecutive Welsh cap, surpassing the 35 gained by Swansea's immortal scrum-half R. M. "Dicky" Owen—1901-12. Already the youngest ever captain of his country, he led Wales for the 16th time against England at Twickenham in March. Only Arthur Gould of Newport 1889-97, 18 times, exceeds Gareth's captaincy record, and only Newport's flying wing, Ken Jones with 47, 1947-57, exceeds Gareth's total international appearances. Gareth, the greatest of all scrum halves, followed three other great Cardiff inside halves of post-war seasons, Haydn Tanner (earliest caps with Swansea) 1935-49, 25 caps, Rex Willis 1950-55 with 21 and Lloyd Williams 1957-62, 11 caps. In the summer of 1974, Gareth was vice-captain of the most successful and unbeaten British Lions team, which toured South Africa. It was his third Lions tour.

The record of the Athletic XV was: P35, W30, L5. Points 1,106-273. It was Tony Williams's second term as captain, a splendid season in which Tony's leadership played a major part. In no less than twelve matches his team scored 40 points and over. The first of these was the massacre of Llanelli Wanderers by Cardiff's record score of 96 points to three. The full results of these twelve matches were:—

Date	Opponents	CG	FOR				Pts	AGAINST					Pts
			T	DG	PG	CG		T	DG	PG			
Nov. 24.—	H Llanelli Wanderers	12	6	—	—	96	—	—	—	1	—	3	
Dec. 29.—	S.G. Chepstow	6	10	—	—	76	1	—	—	—	6		
Dec. 22.—	A Cardiff H.S.O.B.	4	9	—	—	60	—	—	—	1	3		
Nov. 3.—	H Llantwit Major	6	5	—	—	56	—	—	—	—	0		
April 24.—	A St. Joseph's	6	5	—	—	56	—	—	—	1	3		
Jan. 19.—	S.G. Pontyclun	5	6	—	—	54	1	1	—	1	13		
Jan. 26.—	S.G. Aberavon Quins	6	4	—	—	52	—	—	—	—	0		
March 9.—	S.G. Cardiff T.C. 2nd	3	8	—	—	50	1	1	—	—	10		
Sept. 15.—	H Coventry Extra 1sts	6	2	—	—	44	—	—	—	1	3		
Oct. 27.—	H Newport H.S.O.B.	6	2	—	—	44	—	—	—	1	3		
Feb. 23.—	A Llanelli Wanderers	3	5	—	1	41	—	—	—	1	3		
April 13.—	A Ebbw Vale Athletic	4	4	—	—	40	—	2	—	1	11		
<i>Totals</i>		<i>67</i>	<i>66</i>	<i>—</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>669</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>—</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>58</i>		

The above table shows an incredibly high rate of scoring probably unequalled anywhere by comparable club standards. The number of tries, 113, averaged eleven per match, the points nearly 57. One victory which gave more satisfaction than others higher up the points scale was the 44-3 win over Coventry Extra 1sts who, at home in 1972-73, thrashed "The Rags" by 42 points to three. In 1972-73, when 40 points or more were scored in eleven matches, the points totalled 663 to 104 and tries 119 to 11. Never have I had to record such fantastic scoring in the club's official records as those of the past two seasons. It must be remembered, however, that from 1971-72 the try value was increased to four points. But these high scores surely indicate that Cardiff's traditional attacking standards were followed, a tribute to the leadership of Tony Williams who must rank as one of the very best of all Cardiff Athletic XV captains. The five defeats were from the strongest of clubs, Senghennyd 9-6, Pontypool Utd. (twice) 7-3 and 7-6, Bristol Utd. 9-6 and Swansea Athletic 17-6.

After fifteen seasons of dedicated service and 328 1st XV matches to his credit, Tony, like his brother Elwyn, decided to sever his links with Cardiff and join his village club, Taffs Well, before finally hanging up his boots. Tony's retirement ended a great era of the Williams family as one or more of the brothers played for Cardiff in every season since the first of them, Gwyn, made his debut in 1935-36. A link however is maintained as Lloyd, chairman of the club this season, still serves on the Rugby committee. Tony's service will long be remembered gratefully by the Cardiff Rugby Club and its statistician "Massa" Dan.

Brian "Smokey" Coles scored most tries, 20, Steve McCann 17, Mark McJennett and Gary Samuel 12 each and Tony Williams who played in 32 out of the 35 matches bagged eleven. Dave Barry got 110 points from four tries and 39 goals and Leighton Davies 97 from nine tries and 27 goals.

Five most promising youngsters were awarded Athletic XV caps, namely, David Barry out-half, and five forwards who must have made a lot of "good ball" for the captain, Paul Kerrigan, John Manfield, Mark McJennett, Alun Phillips the hooker and Trevor Worgan who missed a first team cap by only one match in his first season.

Cardiff Juniors. The captain was Paul Simmonds and the record: P26, W20, L6. Points 721-248. This was another excellent season for our Youth XV now established as one of the best sides in the country. Fourteen of them played for the Cardiff & District Youth Union. The full-back captain Paul Simmonds, vice-captain and flanker Tony Brahim and Terry Holmes the scrum half gained Welsh Youth international caps. Excellent victories were recorded over Llanelli Youth—W.Y.R.U. cup winners—by 17-11, the strong Leicester Colts 13-10, British Army Cadets 17-11 and the astonishing win over Swansea's Youth by no less than 72-11. The Juniors "A" team won the C. & D.R.U. Sevens, and its "B" side the Losers' Plate. To wind up a good season there was a tour to Cork, a most enjoyable one, and it was reported that the behaviour of the Juniors "was a credit to the club".

The 31 tries and 18 goals by the tall centre Meurig Owen brought him 165 points, a fine performance. Steve O'Donohue totted up 109 points and Terry Hill 72, and those who made most appearances were W. Marshall 22, S. Lewis and O'Donohue 21 each.

A few items of club interest are worth recalling. Roy Bish resigned his honorary coaching job, he considered that the coach should be a selector. Wilfred Wooller was barred from entry by one of the gatemens to the Cardiff/Cambridge University match on 20th October, he had left his press ticket at home. A steering committee in connection with Cardiff's Centenary was set up under the chairmanship of Les Spence. The committee decided to give up fixtures with the Province d'Auvergne, drastic defeats at the hands of this French Selection on Armistice days through sending un-representative fifteens, had sullied the club's reputation. The last fixture in November resulted in a drawn match of ten points each. A blanket and bucket collection on our ground resulted in the club sending a donation to the St. Albans Rugby Club whose ill-fated team were victims of the terrible air disaster at Paris.

In the summer, three past players, Presidents of the Welsh Rugby Union, together with Newport's Vernon Parfitt the eminent Welsh and international referee, made up a W.R.U. Presidents' bowling rink against the Welsh Bowling Association's Presidents—and held their own. The veteran players, in order of seniority were Danny Davies, Harry Bowcott and Les Spence.

PREMIER XV DISAPPOINT

BUT HICKEY'S "RAGS" CREATE TWO NEW CLUB RECORDS

1974-75.

Results including three W.R.U. cup ties were P51, W33, L16, D2. Points 870-561. Mervyn John who had joined the club in 1967-68 was the captain and Paul Evans our centre was nominated vice-captain, Mervyn was the best flanker since Dai Hayward although international honours eluded him in spite of trials and county games. Already he

had amassed a total of 70 tries, and, in 1971-72, jointly with Roger Lane, scored 16 to overtake Les Spence's record of 12—for forwards, in 1936-37. John's season was to be a disappointing one, it did not auger well at the beginning, two players had been disciplined for the first two matches because of indiscretions at the club's annual dinner, and to make matters worse, Lyn Baxter, at odds with the selectors for having been dropped, mistakenly in my view, for the Barbarian match last season, left the club, joined Penarth and was made captain.

Ian Robinson, being injured, played in only half of our first twenty matches, and his partnership with Lyn Baxter in the power house, rucks and lines-out, was to be much missed, in spite of Kallonas and the youngsters John Luff and Peter Rawlins trying hard 'to plug up the gap'. Trevor Worgan, one of the club's best intake of young forwards for many years decided to 'retire' to less exacting Rugby with his local club, Llanharan.

The club faced a heavy burden of two matches per week up to 6th November, by which time we had suffered defeats in eight matches, to Bristol, Pontypool, Aberavon, Northampton, and in succession to Harlequins, Bridgend (by a solitary point at home), Oxford University and Newport. It was the club's most depressing start since season 1955-56 when nine out of the first 18 matches were lost. What was wrong? Somehow we had lost our attacking flair, Keith James our young stand-off half, in spite of some wonderful touch finding, over kicked, there was selfishness in our centre play. Gerald Davies, having accepted a post at the Sports Centre, Sophia Gardens, rejoined his old club, but, as one sports writer put it, he "withered on the vine" for lack of passes.

For some time our full-backs were very inconsistent with goal kicking, and young James too, our props were guilty of indiscretions, and our captaincy uncertain. Where the club was strong was at scrum-half. It was able to call upon no less than six for that position, Gareth Edwards after his return from the Lions South African tour, Brynmor Williams, Gary Samuel, Robin Morgan, Terry Holmes and Nick Rose, the latter two from our Juniors XV.

Brynmor Williams played for Wales v. Tonga, R. C. Shell of Aberavon having withdrawn, but his appearance with those of Gareth Edwards in the other Wales internationals, created what is probably unique in international Rugby, that of a club having two international scrum half-backs in the same season. But the glut of top class scrum halves could not last and after serving Cardiff so loyally since 1965-66, Gary Samuel left to join and serve the Pontypridd Club with much distinction. Robin Morgan also left the club after assisting it since 1971-72, and Pontypool R.F.C. was pleased to acquire this first class player. On 22nd March at short notice, Terry Holmes, Cardiff Juniors captain made his first team debut for the Seniors against Newport (A) and shared in a notable victory. Nick Rose the Juniors second scrum half choice, made his first team debut for Cardiff against New Brighton in April, a winning match for the Blue and Blacks which young Rose will ever remember.

On 13th November, Gareth Davies, former Secondary Schools international from the Gwendraeth Grammar School, a young student at U.W.I.S.T., Cardiff, made his First XV debut against Penarth at outside half. Not unlike Barry John in all aspects, he was able to secure the position and gain a First XV cap in his first season with Cardiff. At this time a London writer described Cardiff's form as "quite out of keeping with its glorious past". After beating the Wasps, we met Llanelli on 23rd November, and this match was to lift away some of the despondency which had prevailed in club and committee circles.

The Llanelli Club had not furnished another permit for Gareth Davies and Keith James was recalled. It was a pulsating game, and Cardiff showed the best form of the season to the delight of all our supporters. Our pack pretty well dominated that of the Scarlets. Gareth Edwards was dominant at half-back with power and strength with lengthy, accurate passes to James. The result was a well merited win by three tries from forwards Roger Lane, Mervyn John and Carl Smith and a penalty goal from Keith James, to Llanelli's three penalty goals from Andy Hill.

A defeat by ten points at Ebbw Vale followed, but this was forgotten with five subsequent wins over Neath, Swansea, London Welsh, Pontypridd and Ebbw Vale. Against Neath at the Cardiff Arms Park, Cardiff's pack dominated that of Neath to a degree I