

# CARDIFF RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR SEASON 1992-93

In the season 1992-93 Report, I indicated that Cardiff Rugby Football Club had dwelt for too long in the past. Things would have to change if we were to move towards, let alone live in, the Twenty-First Century. In so saying, I stressed also that, with some developments already under way, there would during this past season be a time for consolidation as well as further innovation.

I was happy therefore to be chairman for a second year in succession — I am indeed in my fourth year as chairman having previously served for two years — in order to try to press through some of the developing activity as well as look further to the future.

I believe that members will agree that many improvements have already been implemented and that other exciting projects — not always, I admit, with the unanimous approval of the membership — have been set in motion to restore Cardiff to a major position in world rugby.

During a season of consolidation, there has also been achievement. To have won the SWALEC Cup against a Llanelli side bristling with international caps as well as tradition and at a time when doubts had been cast about the determination and “dog” in the Cardiff side was a major triumph for the players and a tribute to the skills and efforts of our coaching staff.

To find the roots of this victory, you would possibly have to dig back to the summer tour to Australia (about which you can read more elsewhere). There were criticisms of this trip at the time from those who felt it would make the players stale. In the event, it helped not only to improve our playing standards but also to build a team spirit that carried us through the year. As for staleness, that Cardiff were as fit a team as any as can be seen from the many courageous and determined second-half performances late in the season as well as winning the important cup-ties after the humiliating jolt given us by St Peters the previous season.

Before the season, also, things were happening off the pitch. The streamlining of the rugby committee to include a small executive committee available to take instant decisions helped in many different ways in time-saving and action-taking and will also have prepared the way for the appointment of a Chief Executive for Cardiff Athletic Club, a position with an identifiable rugby bias and with the task of raising the club's profile, status and profitability.

Always seeking to protect and project the future, we also

appointed two development officers, Jonathan Humphries and Hemi Taylor, to encourage the game in those many junior schools in the Cardiff area which do not include rugby on their curriculum. With their salaries paid for by Mr Peter Thomas, a dedicated ex-Cardiff player and supporter, and Sportmatch, from the Sports Council for Wales, the two have already spread their enthusiasm across the city.

There had, as member will recall, been problems over the future of the Cardiff Athletic team, along with the difficulties of providing meaningful friendships with the English clubs who, like ourselves, were rather more concerned with league results than bringing strong sides into Wales.

We are disappointed that no real solution has been found to bridge the gap between Heineken League matches. But, let me assure you, the Rags have not died; indeed, we are seeking next season to concentrate rather more on the Rags than the Under 21s — with the hope that one day a second-team league, possibly Anglo-Welsh, may be formed.

For the first XV, the season went off to a fine start. The Australian tour had clearly opened up new prospects and we were able to run in many spectacular tries in the first month against Aberavon, Pontypridd, Newbridge, Dunvant and Cross Keys — most of them admittedly weaker first division sides. A sign of the times, however, was the home ‘friendly’ defeat of a scratch side by Penarth, the first time in 60 years and a poor performance in front of those faithful supporters who deserved better.

October also gave the cynics the justifiable chance to be critical with the defeats by Llanelli and Neath. Llanelli did not have their best side and Neath were reduced early to 14 men, with the inevitable result that there were queries about team selection, tactics and spirit.

Realistically, and certainly in retrospect, our chances of winning the league departed with those losses; they disappeared finally on November 20 when we were defeated at Swansea and victories in the same month against Bridgend, Newport and Aberavon again faded into insignificance when Pontypridd beat us at the Cardiff Arms Park.

The season was in danger of falling apart although there was still a confidence among coaches and players that they had much to offer, that there was much rugby still to be played. Wins over Newbridge (on the first-ever Sunday league match at the Arms Park: we will think hard about any repetition) and at Dunvant meant relatively



little but a glimmer of hope came with the cup victories over Pontypool and Oakdale.

The bookmakers were unimpressed, as were the majority of Cardiff followers, but they might have changed their minds had they visited Stradey Park on January 29.

Here, we had a player sent off in the first few minutes and were, unjustly, 19-3 behind as half-time approached. A remarkably courageous and mature second-half performance saw Hemi Taylor crash through for an individual try in the final minute and Adrian Davies's conversion gave us a 19-19 draw. In that moment, arguably, the Cup was also won.

No longer could Cardiff be regarded as the easy meat for the top three or four. After beating Bridgend in the Sixth Round of the cup, we then produced a further courage-ridden performance to beat Neath, confirming once more that Cardiff no longer crumbled when their backs were to the wall.

We defeated London Welsh by 77 points, to perhaps query the validity of this traditional fixture and the visit of the Barbarians, so looked forward to, was due on the same day as the Cup quarter-finals.

Whilst the visit of the Barbarians is still enormously popular, even if neither they nor ourselves can play the strongest sides. Everything will be done to ensure that the fixture is maintained — but whether the day remains the same must be questionable.

Apart from an away win at Pontypool, there had been a succession of friendlies in between league fixtures but at least these gave the coaching team the chance to experiment with some of the younger players and with positional changes as a logical part of developing a complete squad.

And there was still the cup to come.

We had tacitly perhaps settled for a lower place in the league — but were still far from anonymous insofar as we scored more tries (87) than any other league club (Abercynon and Neath came next with 76) and fewer tries against.

And it was the defence, magnificent throughout the season, which saw us through to the SWALEC final. A somewhat featureless victory over the Police on an unpleasant evening at the Arms Park was followed by victory over Pontypridd in a dour semi-final at Newport where we won largely through our defence and a Colin Laity try and despite the constant blowing of the referee's whistle in favour of the opposition.

As for the final, well, so much of the season's planning and playing was vindicated as we beat Llanelli even more convincingly than the 15-8 scoreline suggests. At a personal level, I could not help remembering that I was chairman also when Cardiff last won the Cup in 1987.

The squad and coaching staff had shown that they could take the pressures, could overcome the criticisms and could win a trophy with panache and I would like to thank each one of them for what he has done for the club in this past season.

Their efforts were duly appreciated outside the club. Congratulations to Mike Hall, Mike Rayer, Nigel Walker, Adrian Davies, Mike Griffiths, Simon Hill and Hemi Taylor for being capped in a year during which Wales won the Five Nations championship. Congratulations, too, to those who played for the successful Wales A side — and to Jason Hewlett, Andrew Lewis and Chris John for winning Under 21 caps.

Captain Mike Hall truly led Cardiff from the front, arguably playing his personal best rugby, and he has received dedicated support from all the players involved through the twice and sometimes thrice-weekly training sessions as well as their own personal training schedules.

To Alex Evans, coach for the second season and coming back for a third, I congratulate him and his 'assistants,' Terry Holmes, Charlie Faulkner and Alun Donovan — and also Peter Manning, Bob Newman and Gwynne Griffiths for their dynamic approach to the Under 21s. They had a tremendous season, with impressive victories over the likes of Llanelli, Swansea, Leicester, Bristol, the Wasps and many others. Many of their charges — such as Jason Hewlett, Andrew Lewis, Chris Mills, Chris John, Owain Thomas and others — have already made an impact at senior level.

The Youth, too, have had a tremendous year, about which you can read elsewhere. Congratulations to them, also.

Behind the scenes, many others have made crucial contributions to the season. My further thanks, then, to:

The executive committee, which includes John Evans, the vice-chairman, John Nelson, the hard-working hon sec, Terry Charles and Ian Eidman;

The whole rugby committee and, especially perhaps, to Howard Norris, who retires this year after 36 years with the club as player and committee man. Howard, a former club chairman, captain and coach, British Lion and Welsh cap, was skipper when I played my



first game for the club. In all he appeared a record (at the time) 413 times for the club;

Alun Priday, another true blue and black, former captain, chairman and hon sec, who resigned because he felt he was "past his sell-by date". Alun played 410 times for Cardiff, was capped and first served on committee in 1966.

Further thanks go to:

The team of club medical experts, Roger Evans, John Fairclough, Brian Rees, Jim Naysmith, Hugh Evans and Keith Young and dentist Geoff Price for their willing support;

Ron Ayres, Keith Davies and Brian Hughes, the rub-a-dub men who receive so much exposure now as they appear festooned with bottles;

Alf Heffell and the office staff for their assistance in so many areas.

Tina Nash, our commercial manager for her many-faceted activities — with congratulations on her marriage this summer to our catering manager, Chris Tew.

Brian Bennett, for organising the club dinner and for his work on the lottery — with supporters club chairman Ken Jones and his wife Kath. Ken and Lorna Jarrett, who "retire" this year after 5 years of loyal support.

Tony Williams, for presenting Cardiff's case and views to the WRU as a district representative;

Brian Walker and his staff for maintaining the grounds in good order;

Duncan Gardiner, our programme editor for writing and presenting a product which we believe is the equal of information and entertainment to any throughout Britain.

The South Glamorgan Youth Orchestra for their lively, swinging nostalgic opening to matches at the Arms Park.

And there are others still who deserve special mention for initiatives out of the ordinary.

Steve Cannon, Karl and Richard have, for example, worked extremely hard along with Tina Nash to build the Junior Blue and Blacks club to more than 150 members. They have an Open Day at the Arms Park, incidentally, on July 30 where there will be fun — and rugby — for all the family.

Geoff Ellerman, our steward, his wife Betty and son Darren have

worked wonders in making the Clubhouse the welcoming place it is now for lunches and for social gathering.

Finally, in thanking also all those who help the club financially by taking the hospitality suites, advertising on the ground perimeter and in the match programme, by sponsoring matches and match balls, by providing cars and by assisting in a myriad other ways, a word also about two special sponsors.

First, our thanks go to the main club sponsors, AT and T, with their managing director David Phillips, for their generosity in 1993-94 and for their renewed sponsorship next season.

Secondly, to Peter Thomas, for his generous gesture of donating up to £300,000 during a minimum two-year period. As I have announced, Mr Thomas will be a part of a steering committee, to include his advisors, the rugby committee chairman and the chief executive, that will help to take Cardiff as a major rugby voice into the 21st Century.

### **CARDIFF RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB TOUR TO AUSTRALIA 29th JULY — 17th AUGUST 1993**

It is a pleasure to report that once again a Cardiff R.F.C. party of 27 players and 7 officials has completed a successful tour of Australia where the name of the Club and its members has gained the respect of so many rugby people. The discipline, attitude and dedication of the whole squad was of the highest order at all times while every member was a credit to the Club. In this vein I must congratulate Mike Hall and Alex Evans for their major contribution in this on and off the field performance.

We were received throughout Australia with the respect and dignity that one would expect for an International team and the Queensland and New South Wales Unions must be thanked for their tremendous support and faultless organisation. We were hosted at numerous functions while there was always the opportunity to visit the many attractions that this vast country has to offer.

If the success of the Tour is measured by results then, by our high standards a 50% success rate might appear mediocre. However, these results on a pre season Tour must be put into their true context. We played against 4 very strong sides nearing the end of their season; Sydney, with 7 Internationals, was a League representative side well prepared for its forthcoming game against the Springboks; Canberra Royals were the A C T champion Club for the past 10 seasons and they introduced Nick Farr Jones as their guest; Queensland, the champion State, probably needs no description while the Cairns



Barbarian XV contained 5 imported Internationals, including Walter Little, Eric Rush and Glen Ella. We on the other hand had not played for 3 months and we also took the opportunity for every member to play 2 games.

### Itinerary

A 23 hour flight to Sydney, via Singapore, and we were at the Centra Hotel, North Sydney, overlooking Sydney Harbour Bridge. With the arrival of Alex, Derwyn, and Tony Rees, the party was complete and full of anticipation of a successful Tour.

The New South Wales Union provided 2 liaison officers, Rex Bayley and John Donald, who were in attendance for the 6 days at Sydney.

Our first day in Sydney was a beautiful cloudless day and we were taken to the Trunk Viaduct Park for the first training session which was to become the regular daily format. An afternoon at leisure where some visited the Aquarium and Darling Harbour while others visited a local gymnasium and sauna. In the evening we all attended the Australia v. South Africa Test at the Sydney Oval.

Sunday August the 1st saw a 7 a.m. call for a short train journey to Unlimited Fitness, a gymnasium, where a friend of Alex set up a 1 hour weight/circuit programme. A quick 10 a.m. breakfast and it was training again at the The St. Ignatius School. We were delighted to see the victorious South African Coach, Ian McKintosh, in attendance.

In the afternoon some of the party watched the top local Rugby League side, Manly play with Welshman John Devereaux in their team, while for others it was a leisurely harbour cruise. In the evening we joined with the Supporters as guests of the Sydney Welsh Rugby Club/Choir.

The 2nd and 3rd August saw further training sessions and sightseeing at the Opera House, surfing on Bondi Beach, and golf at the Loveland Country Club. We also took the opportunity to have the official photograph taken with the background of Sydney Bridge and Opera House.

August 4th, a 7.30 p.m. kick-off v. Sydney and for the first time it was raining, and did not stop all day. The Management were guests of Phil Harry and the New South Wales Union at lunch. The game against a Sydney side containing 7 Internationals was played in atrocious weather. Our performance for the first game of the season was good but I always felt that they had the edge. We were disappointed to read the press articles of our alleged stomping etc,

and I can assure you that it did not appear a dirty game. I have since heard from other Australian quarters that this was so typical of the Sydney team.

A 4 hour coach ride from Sydney to Canberra where our hosts were the Canberra Royals Rugby Club. We were resident at the Australian Institute of Sport, an amazing complex catering for the needs of all the top sportspeople. The Royals officials must be congratulated for the way in which they organised our visit. Although training every day we also made time to tour the city, play golf at the superb Royal Canberra Golf Club, where the kangaroos were as frequent as the Southerndown sheep, watch with a record 25000 crowd the Canberra Raiders League team defeat the Brisbane Broncos, visit Canberra Races and attend a Nick Farr Jones' Dinner.

Our game against the Royals left only one player without an appearance on tour, Adrian Davies. They included Farr Jones in their line-up and we had probably our youngest team. Losing 23-7 at half time, we saw a superb controlled second half to win 34-23. The evening at their Clubhouse will long be remembered by Royals and Cardiffians alike for a feast of singing/entertainment by both parties.

The journey to Brisbane by coach and aeroplane took some 12 hours and it was a weary party that booked into the Metropolitan Motor Inn. Alex, in his home town, was keen for the party to see as much of the area as possible, and it was an 8 a.m. start for a visit to the Gold Coast. Sea World and its water slides was a favourite with all, including Charlie Faulkner, but once again they were soon training at The Southport Private School before a leisurely break at Surfer's Paradise.

In the evening the Queensland Union hosted a management dinner at Ballymore. This was the most formal part of the Tour where all the major power in Australian rugby were in attendance. Theo Williams, Terry Doyle, Ian Moriarty etc, were visibly honoured to receive the official Cardiff R.F.C. party.

On a sunny 25 degree day at Ballymore, before a large crowd we played well against a strong Queensland team. We dominated for large periods of the game only to lose to a converted try in the last 2 minutes of the game. At the after match reception we were met by an old Cardiff favourite, John O'Shea, and we benefitted from his position as General Manager of Power's Brewery for the rest of the evening. A good time was had by all and I'm sure everyone would have liked to have stayed longer in Brisbane.

A 2 hour flight to Cairns in the tropical area of Australia and we were met by Paul Williams, the President of the Cairns Union. The



quality Tuna Towers Hotel and 28 degrees temperatures were a tonic for our last few days. The Cairns Barbarian XV contained 5 New Zealand/Maori Internationals but we sustained our tour fitness, skill level and morale to hold on for a 21-19 victory.

Our last days in Australia gave everyone the chance to relax and enjoy the surroundings. Perhaps the most memorable occasion was the visit to the Barrier Reef, or perhaps the Mossman Gorge although I'm sure for many of the boys it'll be the 150 ft Bungee jump.

No member of the party relished the 38 hour journey home but there were no late comers for our 4 a.m. call and a weary although happy band of tourists arrived in Cardiff on Tuesday morning.

MERVYN JOHN, Chairman  
Cardiff Rugby Football Club  
June 1994

## CARDIFF R.F.C. 1st XV

SEASON 1993-94

Captain: Mike Hall

### PLAYING RECORD

	Played	Won	Lost	Drawn	Points	
					For	Against
Heineken Lge.	22	15	5	2	668	240
Cup	6	6	—	—	101	42
Others	18	11	7	—	519	339
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1,288</b>	<b>621</b>

CAPS AWARDED TO: Huw Bevan, Chris John, Derwyn Jones, Tony Rees, Owain Williams.

HIGHEST NUMBER OF APPEARANCES: Chris John 29, Mike Rayer 28½, Derwyn Jones 28, Owain Williams 28, Adrian Davies 27½, Andy Moore 27½.

HIGHEST POINTS SCORERS: Adrian Davies 285, Chris John 136, Steve Ford 100, Mike Rayer 95.

HIGHEST TRY SCORERS: Steve Ford 20, Owain Thomas 13, Nigel Walker 12, Colin Laity 12.

### INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATION FOR WALES:

- 16.10.93 v. JAPAN — N. Walker, A. Davies, M. Griffiths, M. Rayer (replacement).
- 10.11.93 v. CANADA — M. Griffiths, A. Davies.
- 15.1.94 v. SCOTLAND — N. Walker, M. Hall, M. Rayer (replacement).
- 5.2.94 v. IRELAND — M. Hall, S. Hill (replacement), M. Rayer (replacement).
- 19.2.94 v. FRANCE — N. Walker, M. Hall, S. Hill, M. Rayer.
- 19.3.94 v. ENGLAND — N. Walker, M. Hall, M. Rayer.

### WALES A

- 29.9.93 v. JAPAN — N. Walker, A. Davies, S. Hill, H. Taylor.
- 13.10.93 v. NORTH OF ENGLAND — S. Hill, M. Hall, L. Mustoe, H. Taylor.
- 4.2.94 v. IRELAND A — A. Palfrey, L. Mustoe, D. Jones, H. Taylor.
- 12.3.94 v. CANADA A — A. Davies, M. Griffiths, L. Mustoe, H. Taylor, D. Jones (replacement).
- 18.3.94 v. FRANCE A — L. Mustoe, D. Jones, H. Taylor.

in advance. Unfortunately the skipper, Mike Hall, could not be present but Jonathan Humphreys stepped in at the last moment and ably responded to the Chairman's Toast to Cardiff Rugby Club. The Guest Speaker on this occasion was Mr. David Parry-Jones of BBC Wales fame and now a successful author and freelance journalist. David, a member and supporter of Cardiff, delivered an interesting and witty speech which for most of those present finished all too quickly. We would liked to have heard more from such an interesting speaker.

Coach trips this last season continued to be well supported, following the success of the previous year. This of course is an indication of the results achieved on the field of play. Although the final outcome of the league places was a disappointment we are all delighted with the Cup win. Our sincere congratulations are extended to our Captain and his team for a wonderful result and in particular the manner in which it was achieved.

I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of our Chairman and my fellow officers and Committee, to thank the President of the Athletic Club, Mr. Haydn Wilkins, the Club Chief Executive, Mr. Alf Heffell and his office staff, together with the Management Committees of both the Athletic and the Rugby Clubs for their co-operation and support extended to us during the past year.

Similar thanks are due to Mrs. Tina Tew and the Commercial Department and also to Club Steward, Jeff and his wife Betty, coupled with their bar staff for their regular assistance and support throughout the past year. Finally a big thank you to members and supporters who have attended our functions during the year – we trust you have all enjoyed yourselves and we look forward to seeing you at our future events.

HUGH EARWICKER, Secretary  
Cardiff R.S. Club

## RECORD OF RESULTS - SEASON 1993/94

### CARDIFF FIRST FIFTEEN

Date	Opponents	H. or A.	Result	Score for						Score against					
				G.	T.	PG	DG	MG	Pts.	G.	T.	PG	DG	MG	Pts.
1993															
Aug. 4	Sydney .. ..	A	Lost		1	1			8	1		3			16
8	Canberra .. ..	A	Won	3	2		1		34	1	2	1	1		23
11	Queensland .. ..	A	Lost	1	1	1			15	1	2				17
13	Cairns Barbarians .. ..	A	Won	3	2				21	2	1				19
Sept 1	Tonypre .. ..	A	Won	3	3				36		2	1			13
4	Aberavon (HL) .. ..	H	Won	5	3	3			59			1			3
7	Pontypridd (HL) .. ..	A	Won	1	1	3	1		24		1	4			17
11	Newbridge (HL) .. ..	A	Won	1	4	3			36						0
15	Penarth .. ..	H	Lost	2		1			17	1	2	3			26
18	Dunvant (HL) .. ..	H	Won	6	2	1			55			1			3
25	Cross Keys (HL) .. ..	A	Won	5	4	2			61	1	1	3			21
Oct. 2	Llanelli (HL) .. ..	H	Lost			3			9	1	1	1			15
16	Gloucester .. ..	A	Lost		1				5	1		3			16
23	Neath (HL) .. ..	A	Lost			1	1		6		1	2			11
30	Pontypool (HL) .. ..	H	Won	10	1		1		78						0
Nov. 6	Bridgend (HL) .. ..	A	Won	3	1	1			29			1			3
13	Newport (HL) .. ..	H	Won	4	3	3			52			1			3
20	Swansea (HL) .. ..	A	Lost			2			6	2	1	1			22
27	Aberavon (HL) .. ..	A	Won	2		1			17			1			3
Dec 1	Pontypridd (HL) .. ..	H	Lost	1		1			10			5			15
5	Newbridge (HL) .. ..	H	Won	2	2	3			33			1			3
11	Dunvant (HL) .. ..	A	Won		1	1			8			2			6
18	Pontypool (Cup) .. ..	H	Won	1		2	1		16			2			6
27	Pontypridd .. ..	H	Won	5					35	1		1	1		13
30	Bath .. ..	A	Lost	2		2			20	2	2				24
1994															
Jan 8	Glam. Wanderers .. ..	A	Won	2	3				29		1				5
14	Ayr .. ..	H	Won	5	4				55	2	1	2			25
22	Oakdale (Cup) .. ..	H	Won	1	4				27			1			3
29	Llanelli (HL) .. ..	A	Drew	1			4		19	1		4			19
30	Maesteg .. ..	A	Won	1	4				27	2		2			20
Feb 12	Cambridge Univ. .. ..	H	Won	5	1				40		2	1			13
16	Cross Keys (HL) .. ..	H	Won	6	6				72	2					14
18	Bristol .. ..	A	Lost	1	1				12	2	3	1			32
26	Bridgend (Cup) .. ..	H	Won	1	1	1			15			2			6
March 5	Neath (HL) .. ..	H	Won		1	3			14		1	1			8
12	Maesteg .. ..	H	Won	4	2	1			41			2			6
15	Penarth .. ..	A	Won			4			20	1					7
19	London Welsh .. ..	A	Won	7	5	1			77		1	2			11
26	Pontypool (HL) .. ..	A	Won	2		1			17	1		2	1		16
April 2	Barbarians .. ..	H	Lost	1	4				27	5	3	1			53
5	South Wales Police (Cup) .. ..	H	Won	1	2	1			20	1		2			13
9	Bridgend (HL) .. ..	H	Won	2	1	1			22	1		2			13
16	Pontypridd (Cup) .. ..	*	Won		1	1			8			2			6

\* Semi-final played at Newport