

FIRST DOUBLE DECKER NORTH STAND OPENED

1933-34. P44, W25, L17, D2. Points 387-302.

The calls of captaincy fell heavily upon the shoulders of the members' choice, Graham Jones our centre threequarter, whose talents had already earned him two Welsh caps. He was a most deceptive runner who could glide through the opposing defence, though his own was a little suspect. But he had lost Tom Lewis and Iori Isaacs from his pack, and B. R. Turnbull his former centre colleague, through retirements (Isaacs had turned professional), and to add to these defections, Arthur Jones, through illness played in only 17 matches, and Maurice Turnbull our scrum half in only 19 owing to injuries. The replacements did not match up to their predecessors, we had suffered eight defeats up to 2nd December, and except for the opening "run out" with the District Union (51 points to three) and Pontypool (13-11) we failed to score even ten points in the fourteen matches played.

By this time, the captain, not surprisingly, was suffering a loss of form, so much so that the committee had reluctantly to drop him, and appoint in his place Roy Gabe-Jones his outside half. Roy Gabe also suffered injuries and Tommy Stone led the team occasionally. Graham resigned in January after 17 matches, a sad man, and a most unhappy experience for a player who had served the club since 1927-28 with nearly 200 first team games to his credit. It was now a time for rebuilding. Last season Cardiff supplied Wales with ten players; in 1933-34 we failed to have one recognized; we had scored the lowest number of points than in any season since the war. Llanelly again inflicted four defeats upon us, and our Newport rivals beat us three times. Bridgend scored a double over us, they had not won at Cardiff for 25 years. Our highest victories were over London Welsh (H) 27 points to nil and Falmouth (A) by 22-3.

Willie Reardon, son of Tommy Reardon, who played for the club during 1909-14, a local boy playing for Penarth transferred his services to Cardiff as a wing in January of the season, he was an asset, although Penarth did not take too kindly to the transfer arrangements. He was top scorer with 12 tries, followed by a forward—Les Spence with seven, a young police officer C. V. Jefferies on the wing got six. Tommy Stone at full-back, having another good season, kicked 35 goals and scored a try against Newport. He and Bob Barrell played in forty matches. There were ten new First Fifteen caps awarded, namely Dan Elward (23 matches), D. E. J. Hughes a popular Newportonian (31), C. V. Jefferies (19), J. D. Jones another P.C. (19), Chris Matthews a wing from Bridgend (16), W. R. Reardon (19), Dr. E. Noel Rees ex-Llanelly, in training at Cardiff Royal Infirmary (28), police sergeant Harry Rees, a fine prop who was to captain Glamorgan County and British Police and to gain five Welsh caps (31), Herbert Weston, ex-Cardiff High School Old Boy, wing and full back (24), and yet another High School Old Boy the wing Glyn Winter, qualified with 16 games.

Hubert Johnson a former Llandaff forward was appointed captain of the Athletic XV—"The Rags". Seventy players were called upon, and the results P31, W15, L8, D8 with 280 points to 184 were as good as any since the end of the war. In the low scoring season, the top scorers were Chris L. Germanacos a Barry boy, seven tries from the wing, six from Bob Fletcher in the centre and five from R. R. Davies a utility half back and centre. Athletic caps were awarded to O. A. Dawney (hooker), J. P. Doran (full-back), John Glasson (forward), Arthur Hughes (forward) brother of D. E. J. Hughes; Hughie John (out-half), Constable R. L. Lerway (forward) and another police officer Des Kelly a forward. The Athletic XV played a special match with the Welch Regiment at The Barracks Field, a run out as it were for the regiment in preparation for the Army Cup tournament. The seniors played a scratch of the missionary type at Merthyr.

The minutes of the committee record that nine senior Welsh clubs protested to the W.R.U. that the broadcasting of the Welsh international matches would have a bad effect on their gates; that the subject of four or two matches per season with Newport was proposed but not proceeded with; that Maurice Turnbull was again granted the use of the Cardiff Arms Park, to stage an international type of match between teams gathered by himself and Frank Instone, the proceeds for Glamorgan County Cricket Club; and that it was suggested to the Cardiff & District R.U. who were now running the match programmes might increase the number of pages from four to eight. The new double decker north stand was opened on 20th January 1934 for the Wales/England match to a record crowd of more than 50,000 and gate receipts of £9,000 for the Welsh Rugby Union. England won by three tries to nil and went on to win the Triple Crown. No fewer than nine of the Glamorgan Police Force played in Cardiff's 1st XV.

At the Taff Vale Park, Pontypridd, on 7th April 1934, the Welsh Public & Secondary Schools met the Yorkshire Public Schools, and seven of the Welsh boys who took part, subsequently wore the Blue and Black jersey of Cardiff's premier team, they were H. O. Edwards 1935-39, T. Lyn Williams 1936-48, Haydn Tanner 1946-49, Eddie Watkins 1934-39, D. E. M. Coombs 1938-39, L. G. S. "Jumbo" Thomas 1937-40 and Les Manfield 1939-49. For Cardiff's away match with Coventry on 2nd December 1933 they were suddenly confronted with half back problems, neither one being available. To allow a re-shuffling of the team I turned out on the wing and so played my last match for Cardiff as a young committee man of 38 years. The committee made a presentation and testimonial to W. M. Douglas who had served the club as a player, captain, administrator for the past fifty years. Billy Douglas with whom I was to serve as a young committee man for many years, had in his younger days also served the Welsh Football Union, and, for quite a number of seasons after his playing days actively helped as a senior Welsh Union referee. He continued in office until 1940 when Anno Domini overtook him. He had played his first match for Cardiff against Cardiff Harlequins on 11th November 1882.