

PROVIDE A THIRD CAPTAIN FOR THE CLUB

1934-35. P46, W27, L14, D5. Points 427-250.

Archie Skym followed two other police officers who captained the club; Willie Spiller before coming to Cardiff to join the Glamorgan Police Force. Carmarthenshire born (Drefach), he made his debut against Newport in March 1929 and established himself as one of the best forwards in the game, he played for Wales in every position in the pack, though it was as a prop that his services with Cardiff were mainly used. This likeable Welshman, fiery on the field, would have been in the international class in modern fifteen-man Rugby. He was another of our players who captained the British Police, which he did in 1934.

Two forwards made debuts for the back row, Eddie Watkins—hardly out of Caerphilly Grammar School and Gwyn Williams the first of the celebrated Taffs Well family of brothers who were to play for Cardiff and gain fame in the Rugby world; Jim Regan a local boy established himself as the club's hooker and was unfortunate to have "Bunner" Travers of Newport in his way for international caps. Archie's pack was strong enough, he could call upon no less than eleven Glamorgan County Police players on the club's membership, but his backs, mostly young, failed to really establish themselves excepting Willie Reardon on the wing. Late in the season Archie was injured and out of the first team for thirteen matches; Tommy Stone the vice-captain stood in for him during his absence—always acquitting himself well in his own role on the field. Maurice Turnbull our scrum half retired after thirteen matches, and he was succeeded by D. M. Jenkins the promising Rhondda boy who however later turned professional.

A three match winning tour, though by very small margins, took Cardiff on its very first visit to Scotland, meeting Bristol firstly at Horfield and winning by 11 points to eight, then on to play Glasgow High School F.P. 9 points to 8, and then the Watsonians by 5 points to 3. The Glasgow team included R. Wilson Shaw one of the most brilliant Scottish outside halves. His side one point down, he broke through our backs in the last minute to be confronted by a lonely full back over whose head he tried a short punt for the open line. Diminutive Tommy Stone jumped, and succeeded in charging the kick down and saved the match as the ball rolled sharply into touch for the whistle to blow very shortly afterwards.

We drew the first of four matches with Newport and won the next three, but Swansea with the brilliant half back pair of Haydn Tanner and Willie Davies, beat us three times out of four; the four with Llanelli were equally divided—two wins each. Twelve matches in one season with the strongest rival clubs illustrated the strength of Cardiff's fixture list. The captain had returned after his long lay off through injury for the Cornish tour, on which we accomplished two wins, and a drawn game with Falmouth. Within three days of our return we were into the Easter period and suffered the ignominy of three successive defeats at home against the Barbarians—by 20 points to 5, Harlequins—13 points to 3, and Coventry by 5 points to 3. This was the first time to lose all our Easter matches, it was the penalty of bad fixture arrangement.

Willie Reardon scored five tries in our home win by seven unconverted tries to one goal against Richmond, and was top scorer with 21 in all for the season; T. M. Evans the wing got 10, Duncan Brown and the captain each scored 8, and seven came from Ronnie Boon out of the six matches he played. The goal kicking was shared, with the most, 21 goals, from D. Brown. First XV caps were awarded to Duncan Brown (31 matches), W. E. N. Davis (15), Tudor M. Evans (21), "Mog" Hopkins (16), D. M. Jenkins (17), Jim Regan (39), Ken Street (30), and Eddie Watkins (43).

Hubert Johnson was given a second term as captain of "The Rags". Many changes had to be made to find a successful combination; 82 players were called upon and only six of these played in more than 15 games. In the circumstances "The Rags'" record was creditable, it was: P30, W16, L11, D3 with 302 points to 164. Joe Daley scored 11 tries, Duncan Brown and R. R. Davies—the nippy centre, 6 each, and 5 each came from C. Germanacos, "Akka" Thomas and the captain Hubert Johnson. Only two qualified for Athletic XV caps, namely W. J. "Bill" Hurley the hooker, and Geoff Nicholls the scrum half, son of the illustrious father Gwyn Nicholls. The captain played in all of the thirty "Rags" fixtures.

On the summer outing to Minehead, a Cardiff player's tie was selected from the many designs I had prepared in readiness. It naturally bore the basic club colours of Cambridge Blue and Black. To qualify for one, on payment, the player had to make at least 15 match appearances in one season for the 1st XV, Athletic XV, or combination of both. The design was modified about 1949-50 with less blue colour. But our Junior XV tie of today is practically a replica of that of the seniors which was agreed upon in 1935.