

NEW QUARTERS IN THE NORTH STAND. PRAISE FROM NEWPORT

BOWES & HOLLEY. TROUBLE FOR "RAGS"

1937-38. P46, W38, L6, D2. Points 580—260.

This was another great season by any standards, comparable with that of 1910-11, and not one easy fixture in all the games. Arthur H. Jones who was captain had served the club since 1932-33 excepting for a break owing to a serious illness during 1933-34 and all of 1934-35, with a total of 152 First XV appearances. A fine wing, and versatile as would become any product of Llandovery College. He was a stout hearted player, one of great loyalty to his club on and off the field. On the social side he was always ready to sing one of the most popular Rugger songs of his time "It's my Brother Sylvest, Got a row of forty medals on his chest"—and so on, to the great enjoyment of all. Illness overtook Arthur too soon in life, but he left a legion of friends and sportsmen. Harry Rees was Arthur's choice as vice-captain.

With most of the previous season's players available, the club displayed Rugby football of top standard. Read what the Newport club programme of 13th November said: "Cardiff are a bigger attraction than any other club in the Kingdom at Newport" and "even before the return of W. Wooller and Cliff Jones Cardiff had a brilliant side." We scored treble victories over Swansea and Llanelly; doubles over Bridgend, Bristol, Neath, Harlequins and Richmond; there was a successful Cornish tour of three matches. Our defeats were inflicted by Newport 6 points to 5, Swansea (A) 7 points to 0, Blackheath (A) 6 points to 0, Llanelly (A) 7 points to 0, Coventry (A) 11 points to 3 and the biggest, by Aberavon (A) 16 points to 6. The drawn games were with Newport (A) 3-3, and the Barbarians 8-8.

Arthur Bassett topped the list of scorers with 28 tries, then Gwyn Porter 18, H. O. Edwards 13 and Wilfred Wooller 10. Wooller set up the club record of nine dropped goals this season which surpassed the seven dropped by Percy Bush in 1908-09, Danny Davies in 1922-23, and Wooller in the previous season 1936-37. Barry John and Wooller each scored 30 goals for Cardiff, but the record is still held by Percy Bush who dropped 35 during 1902-14.

First XV caps were awarded to P.C. Ivor Heatley, Evan "Ianto" Jones, Roy Roberts, Ron Tipple, L. G. S. "Jumbo" Thomas, Ivor Williams and Tom Williams. Jim Regan the hooker, and W. G. Morgan took part in 40 out of the 46 matches. Ivor Williams gained a British Lions tour to South Africa in 1938.

The Athletic XV achieved the best record since 1910-11, similarly to the First XV. It was P35, W30, L3, D2. Points 469-129. Viv R. Osmond had already made 146 1st XV appearances when he was asked to captain "The Rags", which he did, and with great credit. Viv Osmond was a good grafting second row forward, it was he who had scored Cardiff's solitary try against the All Blacks of 1935-36, he was a very popular choice and another good club man. The Athletic XV went well towards a season of invincibility and were unbeaten after 21 matches until they met Newport United (A) on 19th February, and lost by 6 points to five as the result of a very fluky try by the Black and Ambers. It arose this way: one of the Newport men attempted a dropped goal, it was a poor effort and the ball veered to the right and almost to touch in goal. A crooked Athletic centre had been transferred to the wing position and it was he who limped vainly in his attempt to stop the Newport player from making a desperate, though successful dive for a try only one yard from the dead ball line. Sportingly enough, the Newport victory was by no means whatsoever belittled in this sporting game. But our friends the Old Illydians met a more cruel fate at Bute Park in their very last match in an unbeaten season, only to lose invincibility to "the Rags" by 12 points to five, before, let me add, quite a large and raucous crowd of supporters.

For "The Rags" the top number of tries 19, came from E. Gwyn Lewis, P.C. Cyril Arthur and T. Lyn Williams each scored 8, Ron Tipple 11, and seven each came from Roy Roberts and T. J. Roberts. The goal kicking was shared without particular distinction. Athletic XV caps were awarded to P.C. Cyril Arthur, E. L. Bevan, Glyndwr Davies, R. H. Millar, R. D. Owen, Tom Parry and W. H. Pugh. The captain's appearances, 29, was the highest number for his team.

The Rev. John Roberts, back in Britain after his long stint as a missionary at Amoy in China since 1931 was prevailed upon to play for "The Rags", and he agreed "Only if you are in real need". He turned out against Briton Ferry, Newport United and Chepstow and in this latter match, on a very hard ground the Reverend John finished up in stockinged feet.

Two players who made their debut with "The Rags" this season are still 'in office' with the club. Both were forwards Stan Bowes a working prop and Tom Holley a back row man, and, to this day they both accuse one another of knowing "b— all about forward play." These two characters have many things in common; both gained Athletic caps in 1938-39 and played for the club before, and after the war. Both served their county. Stan was a petty officer in the "Senior Service" and claimed seniority over Tom Holley who was only a poor b— army sergeant looking after the "wogs". Tom could never understand how Stan got into the Navy at all, "He always wanted first aid, home and away." Amongst many honours, Stan counts his appearance in Cardiff's victorious XV over the All Blacks of 1953-54 as his greatest pride: he serves the Rugby committee today and is currently president of the Glamorgan County Rugby Union. Today, at the sight of an old mate, he bursts into song with his delectable "I'm a sailor, can't you tell" . . . before he's even shook hands. Tom Holley's assistance as attendant/masseur to the club since early post-war has been most valuable and readers will be well aware that he has also helped out amongst the Home Unions, universities and touring teams. A good after match man, and entertainer, Tom was the official "rub-a-dub" for Wales during its participation in the recent Empire and Commonwealth Games at Christchurch, New Zealand.

Two of the club's ancient players had recently passed away, they were Hugh Murray



Ingledew who played in the period 1887-92 and John Elliot, 1892-99. Both were half backs, both were Welsh internationals, and on the purchase of the Cardiff Arms Park in 1922, both gave much distinguished service to the Cardiff Arms Park Company and the Cardiff Athletic Club until their demise. The first new north double decker stand was one of the many items in the club's history on which both had played leading parts. In December 1937 our old football and cricket pavilion was dismantled, and on the first floor of the north stand provision had been made for dressing rooms, showers, etc., to meet the needs of all sections of the Athletic Club. From the dressing rooms, players emerged and proceeded down narrow corridors to the fields of play, the Rugby players to turn left down steps to the corner entrance of the ground, and the cricketers down steps to the right onto their cricket field. The eastern end of the corridor led to toilets, bar storeroom and a sizeable lounge which became known as 'The old club house under the north stand'. The exit from the lounge led across to two separate rooms, for committee work and after match receptions. The exit also led on to a new cricket pavilion and tea rooms by a connecting passage-way. This pavilion contained a skittle alley which was boarded over after use. Offices were provided on practically the same area as that occupied by the present ones by the Cardiff Athletic Club from 1956 when the present clubhouse was opened.