

## TEN PLAYERS CHOSEN FOR WALES.

## AUSTRALIA THrice BEATEN

Our two wonderful post-war seasons were now followed by the most successful one in the club's history as the following statistics should justify:—

Season	Played	For				Against								
		W.	L.	D.	CG.	T.	DG.	PG.	Pts.	CG.	T.	DG.	PG.	Pts.
1885-86	27	26	1	0	70	63	—	—	533	3	1	—	—	18*
1905-06	32	29	1	2	47	71	11	7	513	6	14	2	2	86
1947-48	41	39	2	—	84	98	5	23	803	12	10	8	13	161

\*Note: Points values based on those applying for seasons 1893-94 to 1947-48.

Haydn Tanner was the appointed captain and Bleddyn Williams was vice-captain. Tanner was regarded as the greatest scrum-half in his time, possessing all the natural talents with an immaculate and lengthy service. A most astute leader and 'reader' in the game, with a strong and often blunt personality. He moulded a team, already most talented, into a scoring machine and as a result enjoyed what I consider to be the best playing season of his career. He captained his club and the Barbarians against the touring Australians, he led Wales four times with eleven of his Cardiff colleagues.

Most of the previous season's players were available, and excellent newcomers who made debuts were Rex Willis the young scrum half from Llandaff, Don Rees a hooker to challenge Maldwyn James, Les Williams the experienced wing from Llanelli, and another wing in Ian McJennett later to turn to forward play. Tanner was able to rely on no more than 42 players, a comparatively small number for a season and they put up many magnificent performances and maintained a ground record. The team drew record gates at home, and away when a full team was fielded, at Bristol for example, and at Newport where on 6th March the gates had to be closed before the game started. For our match with the Barbarians on 10th April there were some 30,000 who saw the captain lay on yet another "Tanner's day".

Saturday 20th September was a "bon appetit" for the season of many superb Rugby dishes. On this day we received the combined Stade Nantais/U.S. Cognac XV and a really thrilling spectacle it was, Bleddyn Williams scoring three tries, his share in our win by 18 points to nil. This game was preceded by that between the Veterans of Nantes and those of Cardiff for the "Veterans championship of the World". This was indeed a humorous affair. Wooller, over six feet tall, was often tackled by the diminutive French international centre Henri Behoteguy, before he had received his pass. Cardiff's Veterans won by 29 points to eight, though it is true to say the French had a number of real Veterans of over fifty years of age. The day was followed by much enjoyable hospitality offered to our French friends of Nantes and Cognac.

A 40,000 crowd saw Cardiff meet the Australians on the following Saturday and triumph by 11 points to three in a thrilling match of international flavour. Australia's captain was generous in his praise of Cardiff, "the best team", in spite of the fact that W. L. Dawson one of his pack was off the field, injured, for more than half the game.

On 20th December the Harlequins were due to play us at Twickenham but the R.F.U. had the ground for its final trial and the Cardiff Arms Park was to be occupied by Wales v. Australia. Through the co-operation of both clubs, and the assistance of the Penarth club the game was played on the latter club's ground in the morning. We won the match on this unique occasion by 29 points to eight, D. H. Jones scoring four tries. In the afternoon, Wales, with nine Cardiff players in the team, met and defeated Australia by two penalty goals to nil kicked by W. E. Tamplin of Cardiff, the Welsh captain.

After losing unexpectedly to Penarth away on 13th March by 15 points to six (Cardiff had nine men in the Welsh team playing Ireland in Belfast the same day) we had a most spectacular run of victories to the end of the season with high scoring results. Three wins at the Easter weekend, including that over the Barbarians by 13 points to three, was followed by three more on the following weekend on the Devon/Cornwall tour with a total of 74 points to nil. This was a most enjoyable tour—earned after much success, and one who took part as a guest player was none other than W. H. "Bunner" Travers the celebrated Newport and Wales hooker who played against Devon Services and Penzance/Newlyn. The two 'T's', Tanner and Travers, were great friends.

On 10th April, four days after the tour we were due to play our Newport rivals at the Cardiff Arms Park in the fourth encounter of the season, having won three. Could we succeed at the fourth? We did so, a feat last accomplished in season 1905-06. Newport were well beaten by 19 points to three, Tanner and Billy Cleaver at half-back being in brilliant form, Cleaver himself dropped two goals. Tanner had opened the scoring by dummieing his way over the line for a try from a scrum. A close victory over Swansea at St. Helens in the rain followed, and next, a win over Penarth by 29 points to three, W. E. Tamplin increasing his scoring record with five goals. This match was to be followed by a 'revenge' fixture with Pontypool at home. The "Pool" were very soundly thrashed by no less than three goals, five tries to one try. The powerful running of Dr. Jack Matthews earned him no less than four tries.

In this 1947-48 season the points value of a dropped goal counted four points, but in the 1948-49 season the value was reduced to three points—as it is today. In our match at Pontypool we had lost by one goal, three dropped goals 17 points to one goal, two tries and a penalty goal 14 points. The result in 1948-49 values would have been a draw of 14 points each.

Prior to the last match of the season with Gloucester at Cardiff on 28th April, Bleddyn Williams had scored 37 tries, only three short of the record of 40 held by T. W. Pearson since the season 1892-3. As the official club statistician I did not make this fact too prominently known to the players until a few days before the match took place, and so they had one main object in view—"we've got to help Bleddyn get the record". The team played splendidly and attacked from all angles and opportunities, they ran and looked for Bleddyn to pass to when some of them could have easily scored themselves. Gloucester were over-run, nine tries in all were scored and Bleddyn got four to beat Pearson's record, a great night for Bleddyn, his team and the club. The record of 41 tries in one season stands today.

Elvet Jones, the forward who took part in 39 out of the 41 matches was one of the four new caps, the others being D. H. Jones, Haydn Tanner, who, in addition to trial and international engagements made 33 first team appearances, and our wing Les Williams. Those who made more than 30 appearances were W. G. Jones (38), Roy Roberts (38), Les Williams (35) and R. F. Trott (38) Bleddyn Williams played 30 times and W. B. Cleaver 29.

T. W. Williams again captained the Athletic XV and his team had another splendid record, it being: P31, W26, L3, D2, with points 453 to 124. This was a top season by any standard and illustrated a large contribution to the club's greatest season. Eight of his players gained caps for "The Rags", namely Dai J. Amos the forward; W. H. Douglas, Len Evans, F. C. Glover and W. Wakelin also forwards; Derek Iles the half-back, and the versatile Ian McJennett. The top scorers among the 71 players tried were Ian McJennett with ten tries, Llyn Williams nine, J. E. Carter and Gwynne Porter each with six, and five from W. H. Douglas, Howell Loveluck and D. St. John Rees.

In the international field, Cardiff created a record participation. No fewer than eleven of its players were capped for Wales, namely Cliff Davies, W. B. Cleaver, Gwyn Evans, Maldwyn James, Les Manfield, Dr. Jack Matthews, R. F. Trott, Les Williams, Bleddyn Williams, Haydn Tanner and Cardiff's great pack leader W. E. Tamplin. Against Australia Cardiff contributed nine players, against England, Scotland and France ten, and Ireland nine.

For the historic game between the Barbarians and the touring Australians on 31st January, the club made the Cardiff Arms Park available, and never did two contesting teams enter more into the spirit of Rugby. At the end of the match both teams linked arms in a ring on the field while St. Alban's Band played "Now is the hour" and "Auld Lang Syne", whilst the crowd of international proportions sang in praise and ecstasy. B. H. Travers the Australian forward who played six times for England whilst at Oxford University wrote of the Australian team, that . . . "they lost only to opponents who persistently played the kind of Rugby no Australian could fail to admire". Cardiff supplied five players to the "Baa-baas" XV, Haydn Tanner (captain), R. F. Trott, W. E. Tamplin, W. B. Cleaver and Bleddyn Williams. The three last mentioned played also for Cardiff and Wales against the tourists.

The annual dinner to celebrate 1947-48 was held in the Dowlais Restaurant at Cardiff Docks. The city's Lord Mayor Alderman R. G. Robinson was a guest and all present were musically entertained with songs by "The Inkspots" (Roy Roberts, Don Rees and Haydn Wilkins); by soloists W. B. Cleaver (with "Macushla") and Maldwyn James; and community singing led by 'the Bard of Kenfig' Cliff Davies. Never was there a more proud Chairman than I.

Sadly, one of our oldest players and administrators Alec Bland, and a splendid editor (I. T. Austin) of some really superb programmes for more than twenty years, passed away. Both had served our club well and helped to make it great.

## RECORD FOR SEASON 1947-48

Date	Opponents	Venue	Result	For					Against				
				CG	T	DG	PG	Pts	CG	T	DG	PG	Pts
3. 9.47	Cardiff & Dist. R.U.	H	W	7	2	—	—	41	1	1	—	1	11
6. 9.47	Pontypool	A	L	1	2	—	1	14	1	—	3	—	17
13. 9.47	Bristol	H	W	4	3	—	—	29	—	1	—	1	6
20. 9.47	Nantes-Cognac	H	W	3	1	—	—	18	—	—	—	—	0
27. 9.47	Australia	H	W	1	1	—	1	11	—	—	—	1	3
4.10.47	Newport	H	W	4	2	—	1	29	—	—	—	—	0
11.10.47	Gloucester	A	W	—	2	—	2	12	—	—	—	2	6
18.10.47	Swansea	H	W	4	2	—	2	32	—	1	—	—	3
25.10.47	Wasps	A	W	1	6	—	—	23	—	1	1	—	7
27.10.47	Cambridge Univ.	A	W	1	—	—	—	5	—	1	—	—	3
1.11.47	Llanelli	H	W	—	—	1	2	10	—	—	—	1	3
8.11.47	Newport	A	W	—	4	—	—	12	—	—	—	—	0
15.11.47	Leicester	H	W	7	4	—	1	50	1	—	—	—	5
22.11.47	London Welsh	H	W	1	2	—	1	14	—	—	—	—	0
29.11.47	Leicester	A	W	1	1	—	—	8	—	—	1	—	4
6.12.47	Richmond	A	W	1	—	1	—	9	—	—	—	—	0
13.12.47	Blackheath	H	W	2	1	—	—	13	1	—	—	—	5
20.12.47	Harlequins	A	W	4	2	—	1	29	1	1	—	—	8
26.12.47	Wasps	H	W	1	4	—	1	20	—	—	1	—	4
27.12.47	Watsonians	H	W	1	2	—	—	11	—	—	—	—	0
3. 1.48	Neath	H	W	—	—	—	1	3	—	—	—	—	0
10. 1.48	Bristol	A	W	2	2	—	—	16	—	—	—	—	0
17. 1.48	Bath	H	W	—	1	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	0
24. 1.48	Neath	A	W	—	2	—	—	6	1	—	—	—	5
31. 1.48	Roslyn Park	H	Cancelled	Barbarians/Australia at Cardiff.									
14. 2.48	Plymouth Albion	H	W	4	7	—	—	41	—	—	1	1	7
28. 2.48	Llanelli	A	W	1	3	—	—	14	—	—	—	—	0
6. 3.48	Newport	A	W	1	—	—	1	8	1	—	—	—	5
13. 3.48	Penarth	A	L	—	2	—	—	6	3	—	—	—	15
18. 3.48	Oxford University	H	W	1	3	—	—	14	—	—	—	—	8
20. 3.48	Coventry	H	W	3	6	—	—	33	1	—	—	1	3
27. 3.48	Barbarians	H	W	2	—	—	1	13	—	—	—	1	3
29. 3.48	Harlequins	H	W	5	2	—	—	31	1	—	—	—	5
30. 3.48	Devonport Services	H	W	4	3	—	1	32	—	2	1	—	10
3. 4.48	Devonport Services	A	W	3	3	—	1	27	—	—	—	—	0
5. 4.48	Penzance-Newlyn	A	W	3	5	—	—	30	—	—	—	—	0
6. 4.48	Falmouth	A	W	1	3	—	1	17	—	—	—	—	0
10. 4.48	Newport	H	W	1	2	2	—	1	—	—	—	—	3
17. 4.48	Swansea	A	W	1	—	—	1	8	—	—	—	1	3
24. 4.48	Pontypool	H	W	2	2	1	3	29	—	—	—	1	3
21. 4.48	Pontypool	H	W	3	5	—	—	30	—	1	—	—	3
28. 4.48	Gloucester	H	W	3	6	—	—	33	—	1	—	—	3
<b>Totals—P41, W39, L2</b>				<b>84</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>803</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>161</b>

Top Try Scorers: B. L. Williams 41, Les Williams 34, D. H. Jones 22, Jack Matthews 12, W. B. Cleaver 12, H. Loveluck 7, Cliff Davies 6, Elvet Jones 5, H. Thomas 5, Dai Jones 5, Gwyn Evans 4, Ian McJennett 4.

Top Goal Scorers: W. E. Tamplin—84 Converted, 14 Penalty. W. B. Cleaver—5 Drop. Gls.