

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

SEASON 1991-92

What is there to say about a Season that has seen the Club return one of it's worst playing records in it's history. I've heard the words like disaster, disgraceful, disgusting and of course, disappointing mentioned. Yes, I would agree with some of the sentiments expressed but not all, because if one is to really appreciate the good times, one has to experience the bad times. The Season that has just been completed was a bad time, a bad time for Players, Officials, Committeemen, Members and Supporters but I trust that we will all have learnt from it.

"When the going gets tough - the tough get going"

Who would have thought in August of last year that with nine players selected for the Welsh World Cup Squad, we would have experienced a Season like we've had. Everyone I spoke with at the time said that our results in September and October would be on the poor side owing to the absence of key players but we only had to wait for their return and then we would be winning again. What a false illusion that turned out to be. The reality was that in November when our Welsh Squad players returned, some were so drained from the experience that they could not find any sort of form, some had lost their zest, whilst others returned injured and missed large chunks of the Season.

To highlight this, take the predicament our Selectors had in early Season. They had two international players vying for the outside half position, Mark Ring and David Evans, a third international outside half, Adrian Davies was to join us later in the Season - no problem here then. In reality how many games in total did these talented players play for the First Fifteen? Well for those who do not want to look up the records, I'll tell you - 11. There cannot be another rugby club in the world that can boast of 3 full international outside halves on their books and yet we struggled all season in this extremely crucial position. I spotlight this because it symbolises the frustration that many of us have felt throughout what has been a long and hard winter.

It was after a particularly heavy defeat in the first Heineken League match at Swansea that we had the sad saga of the resignation of Alan Phillips as Club Coach. Having informed Members of the details of what happened in the Athletic Club's Newsletter, I do not propose to repeat it in this Report. I think it sufficient to say that whether or not Alan was the World's best Coach, he deserved to leave the Club he served so loyally as a Player and as a hard working Coach, in a much better manner.

Being something of a fatalist, I have accepted that sometimes in life, one can see some good emerge from the depths of adversity and I now wonder if we needed a lot of what's happened to make us take stock of things. The Committee accepted my outlook and following my suggestion appointed a Sub Committee to review the Coaching and Administrative structure of the Club, this Sub Committee to seek outside professional guidance if it thought necessary. Not only did it do this but also sent representatives to other clubs to see what structure they had installed.

As with the parent body of Welsh Rugby and indeed our own Club's Management Committee, it was considered necessary that we have a small Executive Committee which can meet on a regular basis and if thought necessary consult quickly to respond to any situation that might arise. Decisions will be made without delay and it will then report back to Main Committee to obtain endorsement of its actions. This Executive will be chosen by Committee immediately following the Annual General Meeting and it will then allocate specific duties to Committee Members, as well as at some future date consider any alteration that would seem necessary to the administration. It may recommend an alteration in the number of Committeemen. However, at the present time, with representation being required on the Management Committee, the Finance and General Purposes, the House Committee, the Ground Committee, as well as the Rugby Section's Finance and Sponsorship Sub Committees, not to mention the Association of Senior Clubs, the W.R.U.'s District B, The Snellings, Cardiff & District, both at senior and youth level Sub Committees, one can see that for amateurs giving their own time when holding down regular employment, the commitment is considerable.

One recommendation already acted on was that the Club appoint a Coaching Organiser to supervise all the Club's Coaches thus ensuring that our players have the best possible assistance in this area. No stone was left unturned in our efforts to get the best man available, somebody with a pedigree and somebody without any preconceived ideas about the Club. We sought advice internationally and I am delighted to say that Alex Evans, who was responsible in no small measure for the success achieved in recent years by Australia, accepted the Club's invitation to be our first Coaching Organiser. I am sure we will all give Alex and his wife, Kay, a warm and friendly welcome and hope he achieves his ambition of taking Cardiff back to the top of the League. Incidentally, I believe it was a good omen that, during Alex's 4½ days initial stay, he saw 4 games in which Cardiff sides were involved against Newport and Pontypool in the Heineken League, the Athletic XV versus Bridgend Sports and our very successful Youth side in the Esso Cup Final and all these games were won.

Having mentioned our Youth XV, may I take this opportunity of congratulating them on retaining the Cup for the third successive time, a tribute to the hard work of all players and their loyal Coaches, Jack Lewis and Gareth Jones. I would not be forgiven by the Youth Chairman, Jim O'Donnell, if I did not mention his Sub-Committee. Here I go on record in congratulating them and recognising the wonderful work they all put in producing quality players for our Senior Squad in years to come.

From good news to the bad, during the past few months two of the Main Committee have resigned, firstly Peter (The Pen) Nyhan and secondly, John Scott. Peter has been a long serving Committee Member and will be remembered for his Editorship of the Club Programme. Whilst John, not having been on the Committee for too long, will be remembered as an outstanding Number 8 and Club Captain, leading us to victory on a number of occasions in the Schweppes Cup during the eighties. Since his playing days, John has become the proprietor of a Sportshop and has earned himself something of a reputation as a Rugby Journalist. Regretfully, he does not see himself as a "Backroom Administrator" to coin his own phrase. Both these gentlemen will be sadly missed but I am sure we all wish them well in whatever they do and thank them for their hard and loyal work for the Club.

During the past season, I have been made aware of the discontent felt by some of the Membership about the Committee. Like any administrative body, not all of its decisions will meet with the approval of all members but I would assure those who doubt the good intentions of those who are elected to serve on Committee that every member of that Committee has worked hard to re-establish the Club as a force in the Rugby World. It has not given your elected representatives a moments pleasure to see us languish at the foot of the Heineken League. We believe that we have started a process that will lead us back to the top, we might be only a couple of rungs up the ladder of success but up we are going, the players, the Coaches and Committee are determined that next season will see Cardiff R.F.C. challenging for top honours. Soon Alex Evans will complete his coaching staff. It is good to see Terry Holmes back with the Club after his reinstatement, it is also good to see that Malcolm Childs and "Charlie" Faulkner will be assisting Alex. May I wish them well in their endeavour and at the same time thank those Coaches who have worked so hard for such little reward this last Season.

I would also like to thank the Players for their efforts this last Season, which has been tough and difficult, not to mention frustrating. I hope they all stay free of injury next season and that the ball will bounce a little more kindly for them than it has this past season.

My thanks go also to the workers behind the scenes, to the Medical staff who attend to the injured, our loyal Doctors and Surgeons, to our Trainers who look after the teams in all winds and weathers, to our office staff under the leadership of Alf Heffell, to Jeff Ellerman and the Clubhouse staff, to Albert Francis and Tina in the Commercial Department. To the Glamorgan Youth Band who provide us with our musical entertainment before games, to Bill Johnson and his loyal band of Stewards and Gatemens, to our Groundstaff who prepare our pitches and finally my thanks go to my fellow Committeemen for their patience and support, especially Brian Mark, Vice Chairman and our very hard working Hon. Secretary, John Nelson.

I have been a member of this Club of ours for 43 years, from when I joined as a callow Youth in 1949. I have seen good times and bad, I have experienced depression and elation, disappointment and success, but never have I hesitated to say that I have been greatly honoured by being a member of Cardiff Rugby Football Club, especially as it's Chairman.

ALUN J. PRIDAY

CARDIFF ATHLETIC SEASON 1991-1992

Every Cardiff players' ambition is to play for the 1st XV. To accomplish this, most players will at some time play for the RAGS. Therefore, it is important for the RAGS to be a successful side, not only in results, but in the style of play. This season was no exception. The RAGS have played 48 games (three of which were under 21 games) and lost only 6. Many athletic players went on to represent the club at 1st team level. Although the 1st team was not very successful, I feel that a strong RAGS team will continue to play a big part in our club's future plans!

I must also mention the coaches, Malcolm Childs whom I feel has played a big part in the RAGS success over the last couple of seasons, along with Mr Dennis John, Robert Dyer and not forgetting Bobby Newman, who's sheer enthusiasm, can only be an encouragement, not only to the younger players but to the more senior players as well.

On a last note, may I wish Bob Lakin and Owen Golding all the very best for the future. What great ambassadors they have been for our club.

TIM CROTHERS

CARDIFF R.F.C. 1st XV

SEASON 1991-92

CAPTAIN: David Evans

PLAYING RECORD:

Played	Won	Lost	Drawn	Points For	Points Against
39	16	21	2	690	600

HEINEKEN LEAGUE:

18	5	12	1	240	306
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W.R.U. CUP:

v. PENCOED	Away	Won	58-10
v. NEWPORT	Home	Lost	4-12

HIGHEST POINTS SCORERS:

Mike Rayer 128, Mike Thomas 93, Steve Ford 64, Mike Hall 40.

HIGHEST TRY SCORERS:

Steve Ford 16, Mike Hall 10, Mike Thomas 8, Paul Kawulok 7.

HIGHEST APPEARANCES:

Paul Kawulok 35, Ian Watkins 32, Simon Hill 31, Ian Jeffreys 29½

NEW CAPS:

Andrew Booth, Ian Hembrow, Simon Hill, Ian Jeffreys, Paul Kawulok, Mike Thomas, Phil Thomas.

INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATION FOR WALES:

v. AUSTRALIA (21.7.91)	Mike Hall, Steve Ford, Richie Collins, David Evans (Replacement)
v. FRANCE (4-9-91)	Mike Hall, Arthur Emyr, Mark Ring, Mike Griffiths, Richie Collins, David Evans (Rep.).
WORLD CUP 1991	
v. W. SAMOA (6.10.91)	Mike Hall, Arthur Emyr, Mark Ring, Mike Griffiths, Richie Collins, Mike Rayer (Rep.)
v. ARGENTINA (9.10.91)	Mike Hall, Arthur Emyr, Mark Ring, Mike Griffiths, Mike Rayer.
v. AUSTRALIA (12.10.91)	Mike Hall, Arthur Emyr, Mark Ring, Mike Griffiths, David Evans (Rep.), Mike Rayer (Rep.)

FIVE NATIONS CHAMPIONSHIP:

v. IRELAND (18.1.92)	Mike Hall, Mike Griffiths
v. FRANCE (1.2.92)	Mike Hall, Mike Griffiths
v. ENGLAND (7.3.92)	Mike Hall, Mike Griffiths, Mike Rayer (Rep.)
v. SCOTLAND (21.3.92)	Mike Hall, Mike Griffiths

CARDIFF R.F.C. ATHLETIC XV

SEASON 1991-92

CAPTAIN: Tim Crothers

PLAYING RECORD:

Played	Won	Lost	Drawn	Points For	Points Against
42	36	6	—	1245	470

NEW CAPS:

Paul Armstrong, Alun Hardman, Mark Jeffreys, Kevin Matthews, Phillip Wintle.

HIGHEST NUMBER OF APPEARANCES:

Simon Crothers 26½, Paul Armstrong 26, Mike Parry 23, Martin Liddiatt, Greg Swaine 21, Alan Hardman, Philip Wintle 20.

HIGHEST POINTS SCORERS:

Craig Miller 150, Mark Jeffreys 96, Mike Thomas 63.

HIGHEST TRY SCORERS:

Mark Jeffreys 23, Martin Liddiatt 13, Tim Crothers 11, Richard Wintle 10.

CARDIFF R.F.C. YOUTH XV

SEASON 1991-92

CAPTAIN: Howard Merrett

YOUTH PLAYER OF THE YEAR:

Stephen Rouch

YOUTH CLUBMAN OF THE YEAR:

Howard Merrett

YOUTH MOST IMPROVED PLAYER:

Alec Smart

YOUTH TOP SCORERS:

Jason Hewlett 111 points, Chris John 109 points, James Savastano 81 points.

YOUTH TOP TRY SCORERS:

Stephen Rouch 20, Paul Douglas 14.

UNDER 16's CAPTAINS:

Daniel Williams and Rhodri Crandon

UNDER 16's TOP SCORER:

Matthew Eveleigh

UNDER 16's TOP TRY SCORERS:

Stephen Layne, Darren Symons, Andrew Fowler and Craig Silver.

YOUTH RECORD:

	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Points For	Points Against
	36	28	2	6	1016	388
UNDER 16's:						
19	18	0	1		458	80
UNDER 17's:						
2	0	1	1		27	58

YOUTH REPORT

Howard Merret's Youth side completed a highly successful season by retaining Wales's premier Youth trophy the Esso Cup.

In the last three weeks of the season they also won back the District XV and VII-a-side trophies as the prestigious Mitre VII's title. Team Manager Jim O'Donnell retained the same management team and they set about rebuilding a side around those who were still eligible from the previous season.

In the early victories against Rumney Utd 43-4 and Pembroke 42-12, James Savastano was prominent with 29 points and Chris Mills scored five tries from the second row. An early set back at Leicester 17-25, when with minutes to go a breakaway by the home side sealed our fate, despite the Club scoring three good tries.

Coventry on their first visit to the Arms Park were defeated 19-10, as were Tondy 23-4 and Neath 26-3. Chris John contributed 47 points in five games during this period, and Stephen Rouch scored a fine hat trick against Tondy.

Nuneaton were overwhelmed away 56-10, with Martin Gilson and Paul Douglas scoring three tries each. Andrew Wiggins was the star against Glamorgan Wanderers 66-0 by crossing five times.

The first round draw in the Esso saw us visit Newport, where Tony Holt scored two tries and Chris John kicked so well that the home side's unbeaten record fell by 19 points to 3. A home victory against Bridgend 52-4 was followed by two disappointing results at Pontypridd (9-24) and home to Pontypool (12-12).

On our second visit to Pontypridd, a few weeks later, there was a special Christmas present for the Club when the Esso squad stormed to a 30-12 second round victory. Martyn Madden, Andrew Lewis and Chris John were all outstanding.

In the New Year we paid the penalty of having to face Wasps away, when so many of our players were on representative duty and we lost heavily to the powerful English team 7-38.

Another unbeaten side to visit the Arms Park was Carmarthen Athletic for what proved to be a nail biting Esso quarter final. The match went into extra time but Stephen Rouch saved the day with two fine tries in the last five minutes.

Northampton the only side to beat us last year were the next visitors and we won 27-13 with an excellent team performance. Cheltenham followed the week after, falling 34-12 to provide the Club with two leading English scalps.

Meanwhile we advanced into the District semi-final at the expense of the Old Penarthians 54-4 with a side made up of those players not eligible to play in the Esso Cup, but containing five schools Internationals, which showed the depth of the Squad.

Defeats at Bridgend 8-26 and Neath 6-18 were experienced when those who had not played in the recent cup matches took their turn to gain valuable match practice.

The semi-final of the Esso Cup found us at Merthyr playing against Pontypool, who had given us such a hard game at Sophia Gardens earlier in the season. At half time we were 16 points to 18 down, but in the second period our pack began to dominate and with Chris John controlling the mid field, we eventually won through, 29 points to 18.

Within days we had won through to our second final by beating Caerphilly 6-3 in a hard tussle in the District Cup.

Over to Ireland and a highly successful tour of Cork where we drew 19-19 against Highfield, but won at Cork Constitutional 28-18. Martyn Madden returned after a long injury and others who played well included Chris Mills, Chris Wilkins, Jason Hewlett and Stephen Rouch.

Our traditional Easter Saturday opponents Crawshays were beaten 19-10 in a hard game prior to the Barbarians fixture.

On Easter Monday Cardiff retained the Stan Bowes Memorial Trophy with fine wins by the under 15's and 16's against Newport. In the third game our visitors were the

victors against a below strength Youth side, resting their Esso squad and we forfeited our two year home unbeaten record 3-32. On the Wednesday at the National Stadium Maesteg were our opponents in the final of what was to be the last Esso Cup as that Company has since withdrawn from Youth Rugby sponsorship.

An unfortunate accident to scrum half Matthew Brant saw Huw Harries called to the colours and he ensured a steady flow to the backs where the passing and angles of running of Chris John, Lawrence Dovey, Nathan John, Anthony Hurford, Stephen Rouch and Meredudd Pryce were superior. We also had a marked advantage at the set pieces where the front row of Andrew Lewis, Neil Chanter and Christian Johnson was superb. Good lineout ball from Alec Smart and skipper Howard Merrett and the speed of the back row of Richard Griffiths, Tony Holt and Martyn Madden saw us score seven tries and win through 34-9.

The curtain came down on the 15-a-side with a victory over Rumney Cardiff Harlequins by 23-0 in the District Cup, and this was achieved by a splendid second half performance with the pack in fine form. David Callaghan saved the day in the District Sevens by scoring the winning try in injury time to beat Caerphilly and so retain another trophy. In the Mitre Sevens, at New Dock Stars, we had by far the most talented squad on view, and in six games we scored 198 points. Jason Hewlett, Chris John, Chris Wilkins and Paul Douglas were our top scorers with Paul understandably winning the Player of the Tournament award. Our thanks to coaches Jack Lewis and Gareth Jones, assisted by Bob Newman, for a wonderful job and they deserve the fullest praise. Also to our Trainer Billy Woods and his assistants Colin Davies and Tony Rowe for their contribution.

David Williams and Andy Moore coached and ran our under 16's throughout a season in which they won all but one of their 19 games. Major successes included the double over Bath and victories against Neath, Llanelli, Pontefract, Newport, Cross Keys and Marseilles. They also retained the Cirencester Sevens Title, with Jason Kemble the Player of the Tournament, and were runners-up in the World Cup Festival. Congratulations to all those who played for Wales or were replacements. Chris John and Andrew Lewis for the Youth and Jason Hewlett. Stephen John, James Savastano, Chris Wilkins and Paul Douglas for the Schools. Andrew Fowler and Jason Kemble for the under 16's and Andrew Grabham, Matthew Davey and Richard Field for the under 15's.

Chairman Jim O'Donnell and fixture secretary Neil O'Donnell are to be praised for their hard work. To Lorraine, John Nelson and Alf Heffell in the office my thanks. To Albert and Ray and all the ground staff we extend our thanks. To our sponsors Cardiff Marketing, Flogas, Cobwoods, Peelers Veg and Thomas Carroll for their financial help.