

CARDIFF RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB CHAIRMAN'S REPORT SEASON 2003/2004

This season has followed the trend of the last few seasons, where we have promised so much, but have not really achieved what we were capable of. Losing seven games in a row then winning six in the mid season period left us with a very difficult end of season run in. The team produced some very entertaining rugby and were only denied European cup rugby by some dubious refereeing decisions.

The season was interrupted by the World cup and the loss of our international players at the beginning of the season did not help the team. The loss of these Blues players meant that players were drafted in from the Premier team and while the experience will stand them in good stead for the future, it affected the continuity and confidence of both teams which never really returned until the end of the season. The performance of the Blues against other Welsh regions, apart from the Ospreys at home, was particularly disappointing. We lost all of these matches and failed to show our full potential.

The European cup showed a marked improvement on last season and the slim margin of defeat, coupled with two victories left us wondering what might have been had lady luck smiled upon us. The team began to grow in stature towards the end of the season and we hope that this will continue and we will again be challenging for cups and titles.

The premier side began the season with some excellent performances but disruption due to call ups and injuries affected confidence. The experience gained by younger players through these times will prove invaluable through their rugby careers and as many showed with excellent performances they have already begun to mature into a team of players who will soon be challenging for Blues places and trophies.

The hard work of Head Coach David Young, Assistant Coach Geraint John, Fitness Coach Huw Wiltshire and Physiotherapist Jane James has kept the players in top condition and the back up staff of Doctors, Dentists and Opticians are all to be thanked for their support of the team. Coaches Mike Rayer, Howard Stone and fitness coach Tristan Davies have worked tirelessly with the players to improve levels of performance and this is sure to benefit the club in future years.

The company, under Robert Norster and Alun Doull, have continued to work to produce a structure for the future of rugby at the Arms Park and along with the Board of Directors will continue to do so. The office team is an important part of the club as we continue to seek success on and off the field.

The Rugby Committee continues with its support of the club and my thanks go out to all involved.

Keith Morgan has worked tirelessly as Hon. Secretary and I am deeply grateful for his enthusiasm and dedication to the club.

The supporters Club, under Simon Down and his Committee, continues with its tremendous support and is a very important part of the club. To Mervyn Warfield and the management committee, as landlords, the rugby section looks forward to your continued support. To Jackie Flynn and Vickie McCracken many thanks for your valuable work.

The pitch at the Arms Park continues to improve as a playing surface and we thank Brian Walker and his ground staff for their dedicated work.

Karl Williams and his staff work constantly to keep the club's members and visitors fed and watered and we thank them one and all.

May I end by thanking all members for their support of both teams this season and although it has not been the most memorable season in the club's history, hopefully it has been one where lessons have been learnt and will help springboard the club to greater things in the future. I look forward to seeing many of you at the Arms Park in the future and thank you for your support last season.

Many thanks
Robert Lakin