

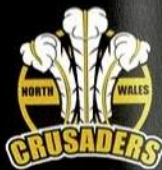
SUNDAY MAY 10
CARDIFF ARMS PARK, KICK-OFF 3PM



RUGBY LEAGUE'S BIG WELSH DERBY



SOUTH WALES SCORPIONS
v
NORTH WALES CRUSADERS



PLUS THE WELSH LEAGUE SEASON KICKS OFF
11AM CARDIFF CITY RL B v VALLEY COUGARS B
12.30PM CARDIFF CITY RL v ABER VALLEY WOLVES
U14 and U15 Junior Origin matches from 9am - East Wales v West Wales



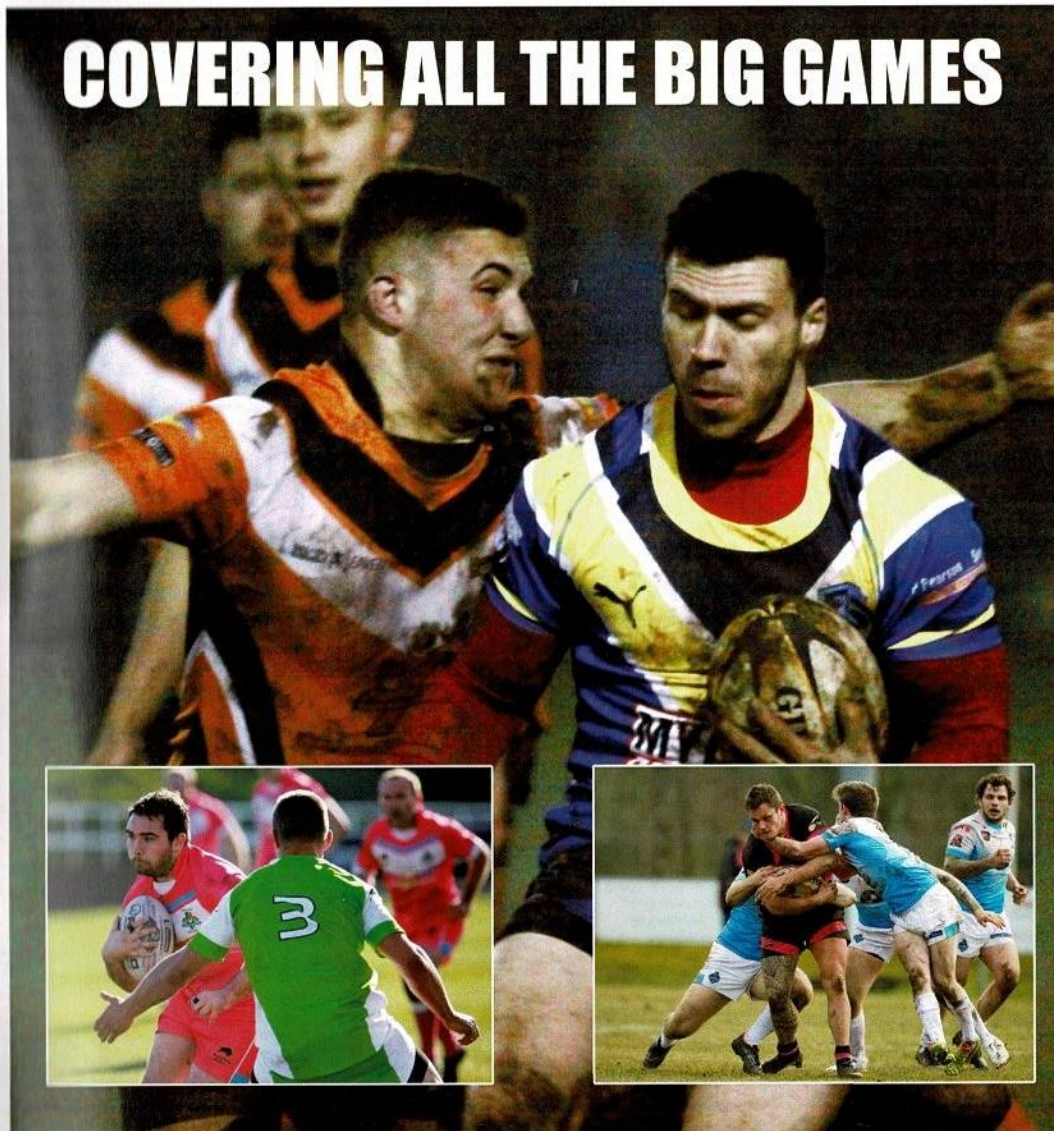
TICKETS - £10 ADULTS, £5 CONCESSIONS
£2 HIGH SCHOOL KIDS, £1 PRIMARY SCHOOL
BUY IN ADVANCE FOR GROUP SAVINGS
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SOUTH WALES RUGBY LEAGUE

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE - VOLUME 2 - ISSUE 2 - APRIL 2015
INCORPORATING THE SOUTH WALES SCORPIONS MATCH PROGRAMME

THIS MONTH'S BIG GAMES...
Wednesday 8th April
Cardiff City RLFC v Wales Students
KO 8pm at Cardiff Arms Park
Sunday 12th April
Scorpions v London Skolars
KO 3pm at Mountain Ash RFC
Sunday 19th April
Scorpions v Oldham Roughyeds
KO 3pm at Mountain Ash RFC
See inside for full previews of all games in South Wales for April

COVERING ALL THE BIG GAMES

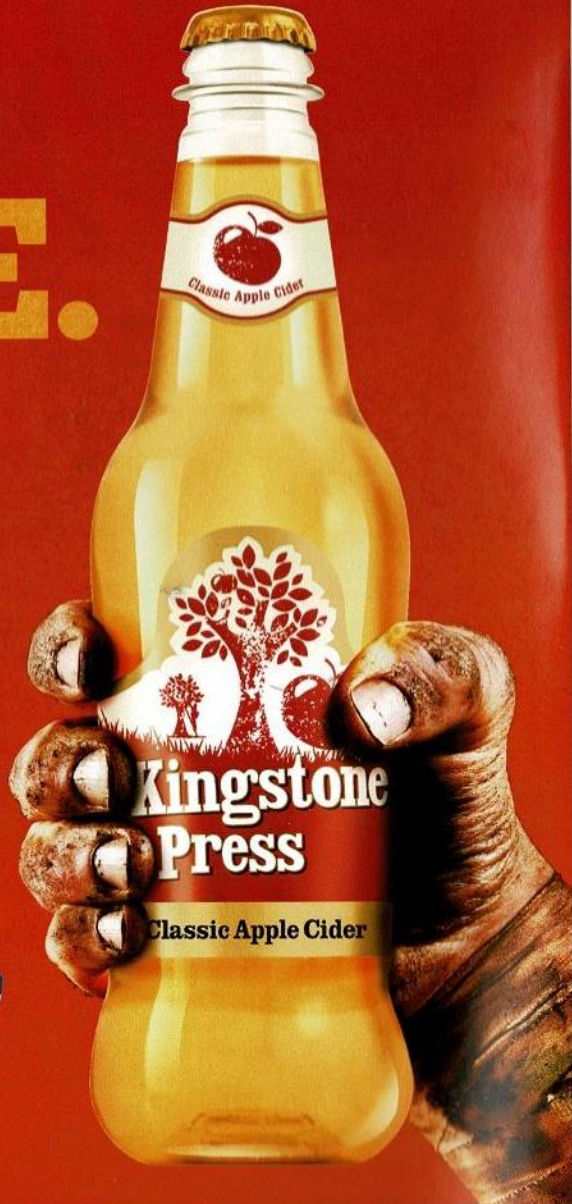


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RUGBY TO THE CORE.



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WELCOME CROESO

HELLO and welcome to the second issue and second month of the professional Rugby League season here in Wales.

Last month, this publication was on sale at matches in Mountain Ash, Llanelli and surprisingly Glyncoch as South Wales Scorpions, The Raiders and Valley Cougars opened their competitive home seasons. Unfortunately we, and everyone else, didn't make it to Cwmbran for Torfaen Tigers' first home game of the Conference South campaign as it was hit by those monsoons we had over that final weekend in March. Their derby against Raiders will be played later this year.

This month, South Wales Scorpions kick off their Kingstone Press League 1 campaign and we have a packed issue here as their two games are just part of a busy month.

The first Scorpions' home game of the season on Sunday 12th April is set to be a busy day. As well as the big game itself, we have a Touch match (the sport formally known as Touch Rugby) between Wales Mens and Wales Mixed, we have a reunion of the 1996 South Wales professional Rugby League side plus we're presenting shirts to the winners of our design a shirt competition. It's set to be a busy one.

Scorpions take on Oldham Roughyeds at home a week later on Sunday 19th April and that will also be a big test. We do hope to have some junior involvement in that game so keep your eyes out on www.scorpionsrl.com.

This issue is on sale first at a big warm up match. We're at the BT Sport Cardiff Arms Park on Wednesday 8th April to see Cardiff City Rugby League host Wales Students. The Students are preparing for a Four Nations tournament while Cardiff City will be competing in the Welsh Conference this year. Their first league match of the season will be against Aber Valley Wolves on Sunday 10th May, part of the Big Welsh Derby day. If you've not got your tickets, please get them fast, this is going to be a big day. The two sides also meet in a friendly at the Arms Park on April 15th.

I spoke earlier about The Raiders from Llanelli. They had a big first month, beating Conference South champions Valley Cougars in their first match of the season. The Cougars responded

well by beating Leicester Storm in their first home game. The Raiders aren't at home this month but the Cougars are as they have a grudge match against Sheffield Hallam Eagles as well as travelling to Torfaen Tigers with Bristol Sonics also visitors to Cwmbran in April.

The schools and student seasons also carry on and while Swansea University couldn't win the BUSC Trophy, they are going for promotion to the Premier South.

In addition to our regular features, we've a special look at refereeing in Wales thanks to our new up and coming official James Jones. After converting from the 15-man game, James has been making his mark and he's been involved in Super League already. Proof that in Wales, we're not just developing players.

So a lot to get through in April before BIG WELSH DERBY day at Cardiff Arms Park on Sunday 10th May. See the back page for the full schedule and ticketing details. See you all soon at a game somewhere in South Wales.

Ian Golden,
Communications and Profile Manager
Wales Rugby League
TWITTER - @ian_golden

Thanks to everyone who made this issue possible. This magazine was published by Wales Rugby League and was edited and designed by Ian Golden. Contributors were Paul Emanuelli, Rob Davies, Sian Golden, Neil Goodman, Mike Grady, James Jones, Roger Neighbours, Rebecca Smith, Latham Tawhai, Andrew Thorne, Chris True, Gareth Walker and Zack Wilson with photos from Paul Hart, Paul Jenkins, Ian Lovell and SW Pix. Printed by Copyprint Wales of Treforest.



The experienced Neil Dallimore, man of the match at Gloucester, looks for a way through the defence. PIC - Ian Lovell



MIKE GRADY TALKS

HELLO to you all and I hope you have had a great Easter and not eaten too much chocolate.

Since I've been here, despite the defeats there have only been a handful of games that I've been truly disappointed with, and with respect to Gloucestershire All Golds, last week was one of them.

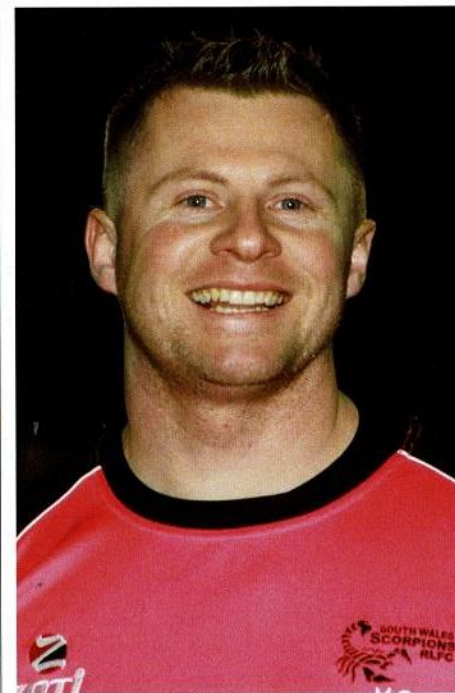
I will defend my players as much as I can, I know how hard they work for little reward but I thought we really let ourselves down against Gloucester, especially after the performance against York. The players can perform better and should perform better than they did that day.

In regards to the York game, I honestly think it was a game that got away from us. We had three good chances in the second half to put us in the driving seat but we just couldn't take them. These are the little things that separate a top half side and a bottom half side and their execution was a little better than ours.

I felt the lads set a benchmark against York and that's why I was so disappointed with our performance against Gloucester. I can handle a loss, but it's how you lose. There didn't seem to be much fight in us that day. We will be looking for a good week in training and a good performances against London and Oldham.

We will be looking at areas that we can strengthen. Obviously with our budget it makes it a little difficult but we will still have a look what's out there. By the time you read this we should already have a Welsh international in on loan who was involved in the European Cup and will be a great addition. If players become available and if they can fit within our budget then we will always have a look and we are hoping one or two more players with experience may come our way to add to our squad.

We have a tough month in April with London, Oldham and Barrow but there will



be no easy games in this league - it's the strongest it's been for a while. I do think we have a stronger squad this season and again another strong togetherness within the group. If we can build on the York performance then I'm certainly excited about seeing this group progress as the season goes on.

Before I go I'd just like to say how pleased I've been with the young academy lads stepping up into the first team environment. Not one of them have looked out of place and so far all have made a great account of themselves. I don't expect too much too soon and will manage them accordingly and look forward to seeing these players develop.

SPONSOR: The Bailey Brothers
TWITTER: @MikeGrady04

SOUTH WALES SCORPIONS 2015

Date	KO	Opponent	Result
Wed, 11 Feb	20:00	Cardiff City Rugby League	A W 82-12
Sun, 01 Mar	15:00	Rochdale Hornets	A L 0-40
Sun, 08 Mar	14:00	York City Knights	H L 4-20
Fri, 03 Apr	15:00	Gloucestershire All Golds	A L 6-36
Sun, 12 Apr	15:00	London Skolars	H
Sun, 19 Apr	15:00	Oldham Roughyeds	H
Sat, 25 Apr	18:30	Barrow Raiders	A
Sun, 03 May	14:30	Hemel Stags	A
Sun, 10 May	15:00	North Wales Crusaders	H
Sun, 17 May	15:00	York City Knights	A
Sun, 31 May	15:00	Rochdale Hornets	H
Sun, 07 Jun	15:00	Oxford	A
Sun, 14 Jun	15:00	Keighley Cougars	A
Sun, 21 Jun	15:00	Coventry Bears	H
Sun, 28 Jun	15:00	London Skolars	A
Sun, 05 Jul	15:00	Gloucestershire All Golds	H
Sun, 12 Jul	14:30	North Wales Crusaders	A
Sun, 19 Jul	15:00	Hemel Stags	H
Sun, 26 Jul	15:00	York City Knights	H
Sun, 02 Aug	15:00	Rochdale Hornets	A
Sun, 09 Aug	15:00	Keighley Cougars	H
Sun, 16 Aug	15:00	Coventry Bears	A
Sun, 23 Aug	15:00	Oxford	H
Sun, 06 Sep	13:00	Newcastle Thunder	H
Sun, 13 Sep	15:00	Swinton Lions	A

A NEW LEAGUE YEAR

LONDON Skolars have had a tough start to 2015. After going out of both cups in the first round, just like us, their coach Joe Mbu was dismissed just minutes after the final hooter of the second.

The club appointed club stalwart Jermaine Coleman in his place and his first match in charge was against the club he quit to be there in Hemel Stags.

The Good Friday league opener they lost 34-12 to local rivals Hemel Stags but that doesn't tell the full story.

In the Cup games, Skolars crashed to two of their biggest defeats on record with an 86-4 home loss to Swinton Lions being the nail in Mbu's coffin.

However Coleman is determined to turn things around.

"Obviously I've got a lot of playing experience myself at Skolars," he said, speaking before the Hemel game. "It's just a case of settling in and trying to get my point of view across and the way I want to play and seeing how they respond to that and the challenges over the next month; we'll build from there."

"The squad's got a lot of young players in it with a little bit of inexperience. On the back of the two results they've had they're pretty low on confidence so my remit in this first month is just to get a handle on the players and really get to know them."

Following the Hemel defeat, Coleman spoke to London-based reporter David Ballheimer.

He said: "It was good to see them play because you can't learn as much no matter how hard you train them."

"It was better as a performance but there is plenty of room for improvement. I'll be bringing in a few more players so in a few weeks'

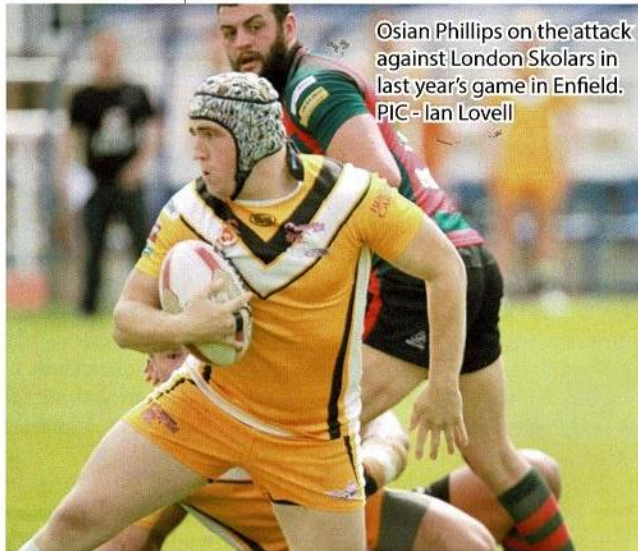
time, the team may not be recognisable.

Last week they played without two of the club's stalwarts in Dave Williams, who was in the 19-man squad for London Skolars against Featherstone Rovers while Louis Robinson had injured ribs. It's not known whether they will be available for the Scorpions game but Coleman will hope they will be.

We've had a number of memorable encounters against the Skolars. There have been blow-outs on each side and close games. Last season, we went to their New River Stadium with a depleted side due to Wales Students' involvement in the Four Nations and were hammered in the seconds half as fitness took its toll.

However we had our revenge later in the season. Our first win of the 2014 campaign came in June when we beat them convincingly at Enfield and then enjoyed a thriller at Cardiff Arms Park where Paul Emanuelli kicked the winning drop goal in a 19-18 win.

Whatever the score today, it's certain to be another thriller with two sides enduring the same issues of being outside the traditional Rugby League areas and both fielding, in the main, locally born and produced players.



Orian Phillips on the attack against London Skolars in last year's game in Enfield. PIC - Ian Lovell

THE BIG MATCH - SUNDAY 12TH APRIL SOUTH WALES SCORPIONS v LONDON SKOLARS MOUNTAIN ASH RFC. KICK-OFF 3PM

LONDON SKOLARS
(from)

- 1 James Anthony
 - 2 Chris Brown
 - 3 Kazeem Faturoti
 - 4 Aaron Small
 - 5 James Carty
 - 6 Tommy Connick
 - 7 Vincent Spurr
 - 8 Michael Sykes
 - 9 Sam Druce
 - 10 David Williams
 - 11 Will Lovell
 - 12 Anthony Cox
 - 13 Louis Robinson
 - 14 Sam Wellings
 - 15 Danny Burke
 - 16 Mike Benson
 - 17 Olly Bloom
 - 18 Smokie Junor
 - 19 John Paxton
 - 20 Dion Champion
 - 21 Dave Ellison
 - 22 Will Fairhurst
- Louis Sutherland
Sebastian Kolasa
Michael Greenhalgh
Judd Greenhalgh
Matt Lyle
Caleb Adetona
Michael Crabtree
Harvey Burnett
Max Edwards
Matthew Cook



Ian Newbury tries to lose his marker against York City Knights in the Challenge Cup. PIC - Paul Jenkins

HEAD TO HEAD			
14 MATCHES - 0 DRAWN			
SCORPIONS			LONDON
6	WON		8
397	POINTS		452
LAST FIVE MEETINGS			
DATE	HOME	RESULT	AWAY
27/07/2014	Scorps	19 - 18	London
07/06/2014	London	18 - 46	Scorps
13/04/2014	London	66 - 14	Scorps
11/08/2013	Scorps	28 - 30	London
05/05/2013	London	39 - 20	Scorps

Stats courtesy of Sportradar

OLDHAM - A TOUGH NORTHERN TEST

IT'S always tough against the northern sides and Oldham are no exception. The Roughyeds keep missing out on promotion in the Play-off Final and with this season (a) seeing more northern clubs in this league and (b) no automatic promotion spot, it's going to be extra tough.

Oldham have started their season well. They're looking for a League 1 Cup Final place with their semi-final against North Wales Crusaders still to be played at time of writing (it took place on Wednesday 8th April, the day this issue first went on sale), and they took the honours in the local derby on Good Friday winning 23-16 away in an exciting game at Rochdale Hornets.

The Roughyeds always aim high, thanks to enthusiastic chairman Chris Hamilton and their coaches Scott Naylor and Lee Spencer.

Assistant coach Spencer recently announced plans to get more involved in the community sides and schools in the Oldham area, a clear sign that they have ambitions to get back to the top - Oldham were a Super League club a little over ten years ago.

"Scott and I wish it to be known that we would love to be involved more with the local community clubs and the grass-roots game in the town," Spencer said recently.

"We'd like to forge links with the amateurs and develop a relationship and a mutual understanding of what we are all trying to build in this town on behalf of our great sport.

"Super League clubs take on heaps of kids at a very young age, but only a very few make it to the top and I think it's worth considering that there's also a pathway to progress via clubs lower down the pecking order."

Oldham have a dual registration agreement with Huddersfield Giants. At the Scorpions, we once had something similar with Wigan Warriors - a couple of years back, but it sounds

like this is being controlled a lot better in Roughyeds' case.

"A lot of people have a misconception about the partnership of clubs like ours with Huddersfield," Naylor said. "We are not a feeder club and we always — and I stress that — have the final say on who plays in the Oldham team.

"Scott has already explained publicly that in nearly all cases players on dual-reg have to train with us at least twice in the week before the game.

"I think it's a feather in our cap that Huddersfield have no qualms whatsoever about sending their up-and-coming players over here because they know we will look after them and help to develop them in the right way and in a professional environment.

"We will be happy to go along and talk to the amateur clubs and do the best we can to answer any queries from them, or from fans, on any subject relating to the playing side of the club, and our long-term objectives over the next three years."

Similar to our encounters against London, we've had a number of good games against Oldham in a variety of conditions. Who can forget the monsoon conditions of last season's home game which was called with seven minutes remaining as players from both sides were suffering with frostbite like symptoms.

And from the sublime to the ridiculous, a few years ago we played in 35 degree heat in a midday kick-off played on the same day as day two of Magic Weekend in Manchester. We won that game - one of three wins we've achieved against the Roughyeds over the years.

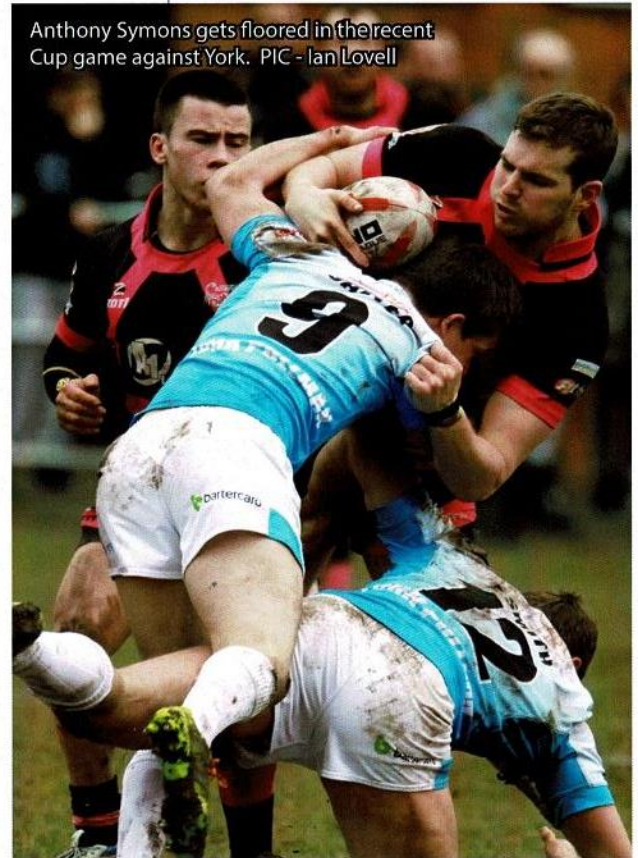
And then there was the drawn game in Neath a couple of years ago in a Northern Rail Cup group tie played in front of a large crowd, most of whom were new to Rugby League.

We've seen it all in this fixture. Will this one on April 19th see anything new?

THE BIG MATCH - SUNDAY 19TH APRIL SOUTH WALES SCORPIONS v OLDHAM ROUGHYEDS MOUNTAIN ASH RFC. KICK-OFF 3PM

OLDHAM ROUGHYEDS (from)

- 1 Steven Nield
- 2 Adam Clay
- 3 Tom Dempsey
- 4 Jack Holmes
- 5 Jarrod Ward
- 6 Lewis Palfrey (C)
- 7 Steve Roper
- 8 Phil Joy
- 9 Sam Gee (VC)
- 10 Adam Neal
- 11 Josh Crowley
- 12 Danny Langtree
- 13 Liam Thompson
- 14 Adam Files
- 15 Gareth Owen
- 16 Kenny Hughes
- 17 George Tyson
- 18 Richard Joy
- 19 Michael Ward
- 20 Jake Hughes
- 21
- 22 Mick Learmonth
- 23 Jon Ford
- 24 Nathan Mason
- 25 Tom Ashton
- 26 Josh Johnson



Anthony Symons gets floored in the recent Cup game against York. PIC - Ian Lovell

HEAD TO HEAD			
13 MATCHES - 1 DRAWN			
SCORPIONS		OLDHAM	
3	WON	9	
305	POINTS	447	
LAST FIVE MEETINGS			
DATE	HOME	RESULT	AWAY
15/06/2014	Oldham	58 - 2	Scorps
02/03/2014	Scorps	4 - 18	Oldham
14/07/2013	Oldham	52 - 22	Scorps
16/06/2013	Scorps	32 - 36	Oldham
24/03/2013	Scorps	12 - 24	Oldham

Stats courtesy of Sportradar



WALES TOUCH - AN INTRODUCTION

ON Sunday 12th April, before South Wales Scorpions take on London Skolars, there is a full competitive game of Touch - the sport that was originally founded and sometimes erroneously still called Touch Rugby.

Touch started in Australia in 1963 as a social or "park" game and as a training technique for rugby league. The first actual official game of Touch was played in late 1968 and the first official competition was held at Rowland Park Sydney in 1968.

From these humble beginnings the game quickly became a fully regulated and codified sport. The establishment of the first national body, the Australian Touch Football Association came in 1976.

A highlight came after the drawn Sydney Rugby League Grand Final of 1977 when the rematch needed a curtain-raiser and rugby league officials asked the newly formed ATFA to provide the prelude game. With a crowd of 40,000+ this game helped to raise the profile of Touch in Australia and was nothing short of spectacular.

Another profile raiser came in 1978 when the Sydney Metropolitan Touch Football side played the touring Great Britain national rugby league team.

As more people began to play Touch more organised competitions developed. With touch's appeal to both sexes, all fitness types and abilities, lack of contact, and only a ball needed to play, it is the most played sport in both New Zealand and Australia and is growing throughout the rest of the world.

The 2015 World Cup will be the eighth edition of the championships and the third time it'll be held in Australia. It will be the biggest Touch World Cup to date with 99 teams entered across all division from 30 countries.

Wales are taking four sides out to the World Cup in Coffs Harbour, Australia:

- Mens Open - open category for mens players
- Mixed Open - open category for mens & women players, 3 of each on the field at any time
- Womens Open - open category for womens players
- Mens 40s - age category for mens players over 40

The match that fans can see in Mountain Ash is between Wales Mens Open and Wales Mixed Open. It's the third in a three match series before their World Cup campaign. They will be making a collection at half-time of South Wales Scorpions v London Skolars so please give generously to help them in their quest for World Cup glory.

There are no conversions, penalties or drop goals in Touch, it's simply one point for a try.

Wales Mixed won the first game 11-7 with and 7-6 in the second so they've already secured the series. However the Men will be determined not to be whitewashed.

Wales Mens Open coach Matthew Burn says: "We are delighted that we can showcase our game of touch ahead of the Scorpions match. Hopefully it will inspire others to get in contact with the Welsh Touch Association (WTA) and get involved in a great game. I know that Welsh players preparing for the World Cup are looking forward to coming down to Mountain Ash in what should be an exciting atmosphere."

We'd like to thank Goldsport Photo for their kind permission for us to use the three photographs on the right, all of which are from the second game of the three match series as mentioned above. To view more of their photos, go to <http://www.goldsportphoto.net/> or check them out of Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/goldsportphoto>.

THE BIG MATCH - SUNDAY 12TH APRIL WALES MENS OPEN v WALES MIXED OPEN MOUNTAIN ASH RFC. KICK-OFF 1PM

WALES MENS OPEN

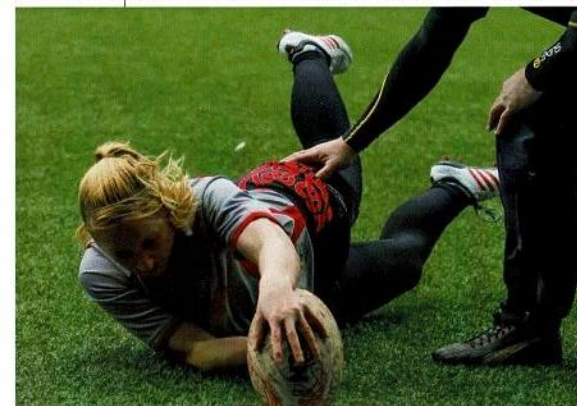
Benji Watts
Dan Rees
Gethin Harries
Guy Griffiths
James Minto
Jordan Purcell
Kieran Evans
Lewis Hessey
Matthew Southcombe
Michael Waghorn
Rhys James
Rob Kotyla
Roger Neighbours
Tim Ellis

Head Coach: Matthew Burns
Assistant Coaches: Roger Neighbours & Gwion Kennard
Management Team: Elspeth Wynn & Charlie Otley

WALES MIXED OPEN

Amberley Ruck
Brandon Davies
Cai Devine
Daniel Rees
Emily Baird
Evan Williams
Gareth Revell
Iwan Evans
James Eynon
Katie O'Neill
Kris Sullivan
Martyn Seymour
Nicole Pike
Nina Worgan
Rhys Waite

Head Coach: Gareth Revell
Assistant Coaches: Hefin Archer-Williams & Siwan Gruffudd
Management Team: Sarah Barrett & Tony Waite



SOUTH WALES RLFC THE CLASS OF 1996

South Wales Scorpions will host a reunion for the 1996 South Wales Rugby League side at their first home league game of the season when London Skolars are the visitors to Mountain Ash RFC on Sunday 12th April.

The 1996 side competed at the same level as the current South Wales Scorpions outfit. They finished sixth in a 12-team league, that was won by Hull Kingston Rovers, but due to a number of issues, including funding, were wound up after one season.

They had been provisionally promised a place in the 1997 Super League competition as a fast-tracked franchise side, in a deal that could have also saved Workington Town from relegation, but the Super League clubs at the time refused to vote them in as the Sky Sports money would have had to have been split a further two ways.

However this was the side that launched modern club Rugby League in South Wales and it's never looked back.

From the ashes of that 1996 side, who played half of their home games in Aberavon and half in Cardiff, came Cardiff Demons RLFC, who themselves unsuccessfully applied for a Super League franchise for an expanded 1999 competition with that place going to Gateshead Thunder.

Despite that second set-back, the Demons continued and their success spawned the Welsh Conference and from that came Celtic Crusaders and eventually North Wales Crusaders and South Wales Scorpions.

The 1996 South Wales club was run by Mike Nicholas, now President of Wales Rugby League, and coached by then national side supremo Clive Griffiths, who went on to be North Wales Crusaders' first head coach.

Nicholas said: "I won't be able to make it on this occasion, but I look forward to next year's reunion when we'll celebrate 20 years.

"I think that we did very well that season considering we built the side with only a few

weeks' notice. It would have been fantastic to have carried on but a lot of things went against us. However it's all taken off since then so I think we did sow the seeds for modern day Rugby League in Wales."

Fielding 42 players that season, including established internationals in Paul Moriarty, Gerald Cordle, Andy Currier, John Fieldhouse, Paul John, Hugh Waddell and David Williams, their top points scorer was former Wales Student international loan Bebb, who now coaches the Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera RL sides.

Bebb, who scored seven tries and kicked 45 goals that year, remember the season well and is looking forward to catching up with old friends on Sunday 12th April.

"I recently enjoyed a wonderful reunion with my old Welsh Students buddies so the chance to see the guys from 1996 is too good to miss," he said. "The squad was very close, enjoyed the glory and the hardships together and played some good rugby at times so there are plenty of memories to recap.

"The best memories for me are the Sunday nights in Cardiff after matches, especially with the mad Aussie boys! Being introduced to the late-night drinking dens of Bute Town by Gerald Cordle was interesting too. We had some memorable matches too - notably the Carlisle victory in front of the Sky cameras - it all still seems like yesterday."

Bebb's coaching has brought at least two stars into the limelight, twins Connor and Curtis Davies, who are now in the Scorpions' first team squad and he hopes to see them take to the field on Sunday 12th April.

"I'm genuinely optimistic about the future of the game in Wales and seeing players from my school graduating to the senior pro game is a huge thrill," he said. "We will continue to offer our boys the opportunity to enjoy both codes and provide every encouragement to those who see League as a viable career path."

HOW TO CREATE A FIRST TEAM KIT

Ian Golden explains just how South Wales Scorpions come to be playing in their current first team kit and how it all got made.

THE idea came from Neil Williams, our team manager, Gareth Hopkins from Zoti, our kit suppliers, and myself during a meeting last November. We received feedback from supporters who said that they wanted to get involved in making decisions while we also wanted to get the Mountain Ash community, especially the children, involved in their club.

So we thought, let's put the kit design out into the community. Let the children come up with ideas and we'll then put it to an online supporter vote.

When we've run competitions like this in the past in other areas, we've had numbers that have struggled to reach double figures but the response this time was amazing. I personally drove around the schools to pick up more and more of these pieces of paper with designs on and in the end had over a 100 to sort out.

We as a club selected six possible designs for the home strip and three for the second so we had two semi-finals for the former.

The fans then voted and the winners were chosen. When the designs went online, there were clear winners from the start and the majorities continued to increase as the voting continued.

In the end it was Cira Griffith, from Pengeulan Primary School who submitted the winning pink and black design for the home kit, while a joint effort from brothers Keian and Jaydan Pugh, from Caegarw Primary School, won the away competition.

The designs were then sent to Zoti who turned them around, almost to the original design that the children made, with little changed.

Then in February the away kit arrived followed by the home kit in early March, ready for sponsors, shirt numbers and names to be added by the RFL approved company.

On Sunday 12th April at half-time in the South Wales Scorpions v London Skolars game, the winners will be presented with a signed replica of the shirt that they designed.

We'd like to thank everyone for entering and for all the primary schools in Mountain Ash who supported this fantastic community competition.



Cira Griffith



Keian and Jaydan Pugh

STUDENTS TAKE ON THE CAPITAL



Action from last year's Wales v England Student international. PIC - Paul Hart.

WEDNESDAY 8th April sees a big preparation match for both Cardiff City Rugby League and Wales Students. Cardiff have the Welsh Conference and their involvement in Big Welsh Derby Day in May, while Wales Students have the upcoming Student Four Nations. Wales Students coach **Latham Tawhai** talks about how his side's preparations are going and what they hope to achieve in 2015.

PREPARATIONS for the upcoming Student (Home Nations) Tournament are progressing steadily. This year we have had a significant increase in the number of trialists and I would say the standard looks to be higher across the board as well.

That makes our lives more difficult in trying to narrow the group down but we're confident whichever 20 players get chosen to represent Wales at the tournament will do themselves and their country proud.

There are a few players who narrowly missed out last year really pushing hard for inclusion in 2015 and with the addition of some exciting young talent emerging from the various Wales

RL programmes I'm confident Wales Student Rugby League can play it's part in developing these players and help them along the pathway in to professional Rugby League and further international honours.

It was great to see a number of last year's Student team (including our assistant coach Phil Carleton) get call ups to John Kear's senior side and some of them will once again play key roles in this year's Student side.

The group set some very high standards in 2014 and with a good number of those available again this year they'll be integral to not only maintaining those standards but also raising them as we look to go one better.

Should we need to call new players in, the upcoming trial game against Cardiff City RL will give players a decent opportunity to showcase their talent and stake a claim for one of the 20 spots. I'd like to thank Cardiff RL and all involved for making this game possible as I'm sure the players are.

From here we'll narrow the squad down once again as we head in to our final preparations for the tournament with three intensive training weekends, one of which will involve another training game.

THE BIG MATCH - WEDNESDAY 8TH APRIL CARDIFF CITY RLFC v WALES STUDENTS BT SPORT CARDIFF ARMS PARK. KICK-OFF 8PM

Cardiff City RLFC founder **Chris True** welcomes the Wales Students side to BT Sport Cardiff Arms Park...

WE are pleased to welcome Wales Students to Cardiff Arms Park ahead of their 2015 Four Nations challenge. Cardiff City RLFC have agreed to support and sponsor Wales Students for this tournament.

Student Rugby League is a great step into the game as proven through former Cardiff Demon and Wales Student captain Izaac Duffy. Izaac progressed in a year from Student rugby league to play semi professionally for All Golds, and won his full Welsh cap in 2014.

As the premier club in Cardiff, we are keen to attract students who wish to play rugby league to our club.

We train at Rumney RFC all year round and

play from January to October, with home games out of the Arms Park, operating two senior sides and a full junior set up. It is our ambition to establish a women's team by 2016.

The lads are aware of the challenge Wales Students will give us in this match. We have only been together for three games and improve each time. There are talented players at Cardiff but our real strength is in our ethos and spirit, no player is bigger than the team.

With only two games to go before our league season kicks off, we are looking to learn from every experience and take it in to the season. Spectators should expect a fast, physical and adventurous game with lots of tries!

**ALSO THIS MONTH - WEDNESDAY 15TH APRIL
CARDIFF CITY RL v ABER VALLEY WOLVES
CARDIFF ARMS PARK - KO 8PM**

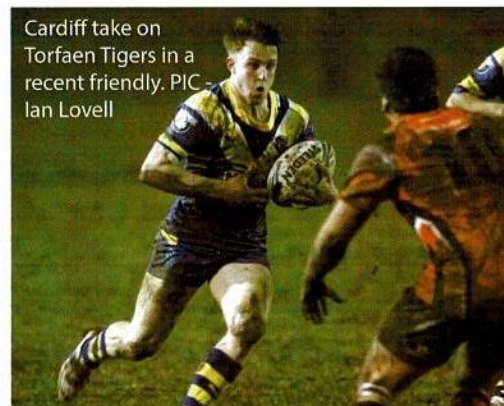
INFO: www.cardiffrugbyleague.com

CARDIFF CITY RLFC (from)

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Jacob Brennan | 15. Eddie Saia |
| 2. Jordan Rahman | 16. Callam McCabe |
| 3. Wayne DeCruz | 17. Daniel Hiscocks |
| 4. Chris True | 18. David Lewis |
| 5. Duane Illes | 19. Daniel Crimmins |
| 6. Tom Mace | 20. Matt Williams |
| 7. Olly Hughes (VC) | 21. Ben Tomas |
| 8. Nathan Davies | 22. James Mann |
| 9. Kyle Rose | 23. Steve May |
| 10. Artur Kozels | 24. Charlie Tribble |
| 11. Liam Muale | 25. Jamie liles |
| 12. Owain Davies (C) | 26. Tom Morgan |
| 13. Andrew Prouse | 27. Paul Wallis |
| 14. Joe Davies | 28. Richard East |
| | 29. Malkit Singh |

WALES STUDENTS (from)

- Lewis Donnelly (Aberystwyth University)
- Lewys Weaver (Blackpool and The Fylde College)
- Jordan Sheridan (Cardiff University),
- Jordan Howells (Cardiff Metropolitan University)
- James Gahan (University of Gloucestershire)
- Josh Williams (University of Gloucestershire)
- Tom Davies (Newcastle University)
- Kurt Greatorex (University of South Wales)
- Yousif Sulliman (University of South Wales)
- Marcus Webb (Bridgend College)
- Efan Ellis (University of Wales Trinity St David)
- Joe Symons (Brynteg Comprehensive School)
- Curtis Davies (Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera)
- Alex King (Bridgend College)
- Jacob Wright (Swansea University)
- Alec Wheatley (Swansea University)
- Morgan Evans (University of Bath)
- James Mason (University of Gloucestershire)
- Nathan Rainer (University of Gloucestershire)
- Dafydd Lloyd (Coleg y Cymoedd)
- Rhys Davies (Coleg Gwent)
- Harry Boots (Maesteg Comprehensive School)
- Osian Phillips (University of South Wales)
- Jordan Thomas (Maesteg Comprehensive School)
- Anthony Palmer (Swansea University)
- Owen Thomas (University of Wales Trinity St David)
- Connor Davies (Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera)



Cardiff take on Torfaen Tigers in a recent friendly. PIC Ian Lovell

A RECORD BREAKING SCORPIONS YEAR

LET'S be honest, it's tough in all sports these days and Rugby League has often suffered in regards to coverage and sponsorship, but South Wales Scorpions have excelled in the latter for 2015 bringing in 10 times as much than last year and having all players sponsored for the first time ever. Some players have even managed to attract more than one sponsor to their name.

In addition to player sponsors, the club have attracted a number of shirt and club partners. Here's a run-down of exactly who they are. All are listed on www.scorpionsrl.com where you can link to their respective websites...

MAIN SHIRT SPONSORS - A1 GROUP

The A1 Group of Companies is one of the UK's leading integrated Waste Management Service Suppliers, Scrap Metal Dealers and Vehicle De-Pollution providers. They have been established for over 15 years and have seen significant growth in recent years leading then to an unrivaled level of commitment and resource to meet client demands in the fields of wet waste disposal, metal recycling, car spares and loo hire. The Group embraces new technology and the very latest equipment to deliver real added value to their clients.

THE OTHER 2015 MAJOR PARTNERS FIELDS DATA RECOVERY

Committed to providing a world class data recovery service backed by the best staff and the best equipment. Over 100,000 successful data recovery jobs since 2001. Expert service with a free diagnosis, fast delivery and a 97.5% recovery rate for hard drives and RAIDs.

BODY BALANCE SPORTS AND HOLISTIC THERAPIES

Body Balance is run by Ceri Ann Thomson, our massage therapist and her company has already gained an excellent reputation from a number of sports clubs around the area. Specialising in aromatherapy, reflexology, deep tissue massage and sports massage, Body Balance can cater for both teams and individuals alike for injury advice.

FORCES FITNESS

Forces Fitness is a hard but fun way to get fit using traditional military exercises along with modern day functional fitness. All of their sessions are conducted outdoors and are instructed by either ex or serving members of the armed forces. Their Instructors all hold the relevant fitness qualifications and they will be happy to drive you to achieve your goals.

NG LANDSCAPES

NG Landscapes Ltd provide landscape gardening services throughout all of South Wales. They specialise in artificial grass and are preferred provider and installer for Namgrass UK. As well as artificial grass they also provide all the normal domestic and commercial landscaping services from turfing and grass cutting to hedge and tree trimming.

GTFM 107.9

Pontypridd's number one radio station, GTFM is Wales' original community station established in 1999 by the Glyntaf Tenants and Residents Association in Pontypridd. The station has covered Rugby League in Wales for the last ten years as well as other sports like rugby union and football. Their flagship sports show is "The Season Ticket" broadcast from 2-6pm every Saturday while The Rugby Show is transmitted Fridays at 6.30pm.

ZOTI SPORTS

Zoti Sports is specialised in supplying match clothing and sportswear in any design and colour. They are experts in sublimation (digitally printed clothes) and most of their garments are available with unlimited logos. Zoti has evolved from rugby to other sports like football, handball, hockey and basketball.

L7 SECURITY

Working alongside a partner training company, Level 7 Security Ltd not only provide staff, but staff that are qualified, trained, professionals who easily work alongside each other as a team. They take pride in their staff and the staff take pride in themselves and their company.



SCORPIONS SQUAD AND PLAYER SPONSORS IN FULL

NO	NAME	SPONSOR	POSITION	TWITTER
1	Jordan Sheridan	Underground Vision	Fullback	@JSheridan112
2	Ian Newbury	TMI SEO Ltd - Smart Live Gaming	Wing	@iannewbury
3	Paul Edwards	Rhygos RFC	Centre	@Paul__edwards96
4	Kyle Scrivens	Copyprint Wales	Wing	@scriv15
5	Ben Jones	Ador Beauty Salon	Fullback	@Benjones0123
6	Curtis Davies	TDW Distribution	Stand Off	@curtdavies71
7	Paul Emanuelli	Avon (Cardiff and Caerphilly) / NG Landscapes	Half Back	@10PAULO
8	Osian Phillips	ianlovell.com	Prop	@Osian_Phillips
9	Connor Farrer	Gareth and Julie Laugharne	Hooker	
10	Morgan Evans	Zoti Sports	Prop	@MorganLucEvans
11	Mike Connor	Body Balance Sports and Hollistic Therapies	Prop	@MichaelConnor06
12	Barrie Phillips	L7 Security	Second Row	@bizzalkicks
13	Neil Dallimore	DG Sporting Memorabilia	Utility Forward	@NeilDally12
14	Dafydd Hellard	Body Balance Sports and Hollistic Therapies	Wing	@dafhell
15	Rhys Davies	Mother Natures Goodies	Prop	@RhysDavies_1
16	Scott Giles	Body Balance / Ryan's Carpet Fitting	Prop	@gilez12
17	Zak Williams	Jinked Tattoos / Force's Fitness / Anthony Williams Maintenance	Hooker	@wzak77
18	Bradley Hill	L7 Security	Centre	
19	Connor Davies	TDW Distribution	Loose Forward	@ConnorDavies15
20	Tala Petelo	Gareth and Julie Laugharne	Second Row	@Tnpetelo
21	Paul Songhurst	Angus Turnbull Construction	Centre	@PaulSongster
22	Lewis Tutt	Forces Exiles	Utility Forward	@LewiVenga
23	Anthony Symons	King Construction Consultants / Pearce Transport	Prop	
24	Craig Lewis	Wat Will Design	Prop	
26	Daf Lloyd	L7 Security	Centre	@DLloyd150
27	Marcus Webb	The Rolling Box	Centre	@MarcusWebb10
28	Geraint Clarke	L7 Security	Prop	@Geraintclarke1

THE RISING MAN IN THE MIDDLE

Up and coming referee **James Jones** has been refereeing in rugby union at the highest level for a number of years. But now, he, like many players before him, has converted to the Rugby League. Here, he tells us why and what he hopes to achieve in the 13-man game...

CONVERTING to Rugby League, like I'm sure it is to a lot of players, wasn't an easy decision. I had a good career in the 15-man game.

I refereed over 50 Pro 12 games and I was a European Cup match official at a semi-final. I officiated on the international test panel as a referee and touch judge, refereed six tier two

tests and two Junior World Cup Finals.

I refereed over 100 international 7s games including six tournament finals and refereed at the 2009 7s World Cup. I was told that had Wales not reached the Final (they won in the end) then I would have been favourite to referee the Final so thanks for that Wales!

But the highlight for me was refereeing Saracens v South Africa at Wembley Stadium. I'd love to get there again in Rugby League.

I refereed my first senior rugby union game at 13 years old. I started refereeing as I enjoyed playing rugby union but didn't like tackling. I also couldn't catch and pass so didn't stand a chance other than being a super sub! My dad refereed to a high level and was very

encouraging towards me – he's still my biggest critic, even now I'm in rugby league (don't worry James, knowing Rugby League fans, that will soon change – Ed). I turned professional in 2008.

So after all of that, why did I switch?

Well I have always been a big fan of Rugby League and have enjoyed watching the game, and with the Welsh Rugby Union cutting the number of professional referees in half, it knocked my confidence and form.

Being mates with the former Wales RL coach Clive Griffiths (yes he does have at least one friend ha ha), we chatted and he persuaded me to give league refereeing a go.

That was over a year ago

and I haven't looked back and have been supported strongly by Wales Rugby League, being mentored by Ian Curzon and Richard Nuth, two of our other RFL officials down here, as well as James Child and Ben Thaler, my "bosses" at the Rugby Football League.

The RFL have been great in giving me some fantastic opportunities and it is like a breath of fresh air. I am really enjoying it and ambitious again to climb the ladder. My goal at the start of this season was to officiate at Super League level and this came about two weeks ago at Salford v Wakefield when I was named as in goal touch judge.

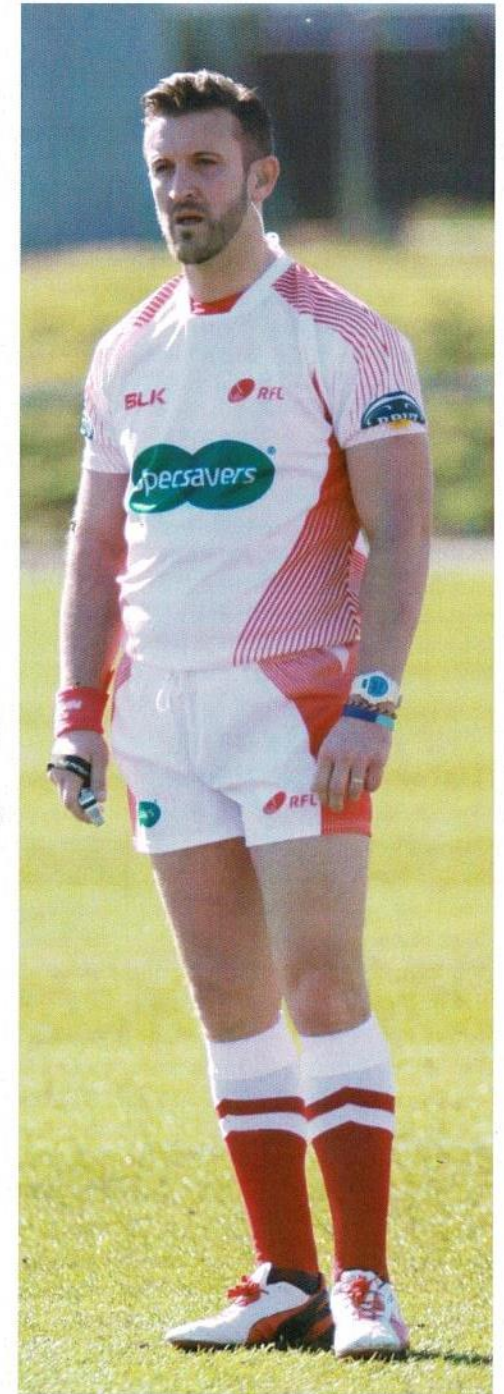
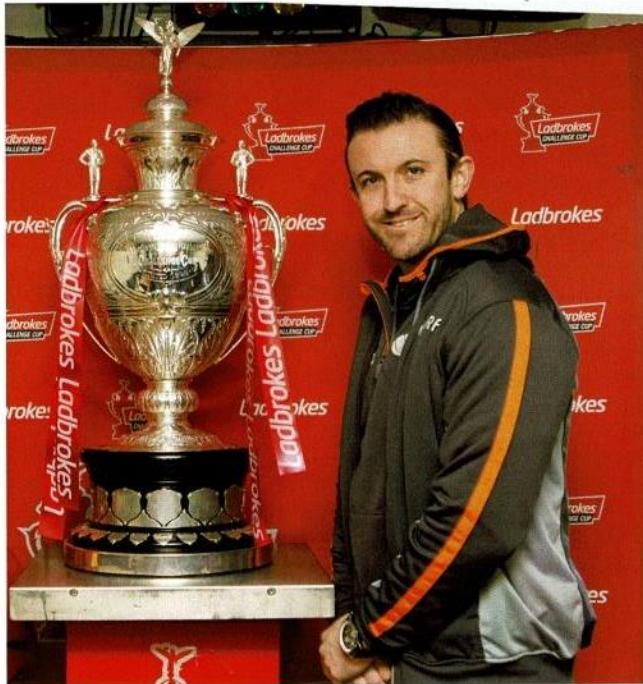
Being part of the match officials team on the park was a great buzz and it felt great to be involved in professional sport again. I am enjoying each game as it comes and hope to aim as high as I can season on season.

My ultimate goal would be to referee at super league and as such be the first Welsh referee to do so. The game is growing and developing fast in Wales and I am very proud to represent the WRL whenever I officiate and travel.

I have found, as I'm sure all players do, that the game of Rugby League refereeing is much faster and the ball in play time is far higher. It is a real lung buster constantly being on my toes - no lineouts and a real relief not having to sort out collapsed scrums! I also love the fact there aren't any low scoring dog fights. Tries are almost always scored and I find it very entertaining.

It's been a great experience so far and I am learning every game. Some of the Valley Cougars have certainly taught me a thing or two during my first few seasons. Paulo Emanuelli in particular - he would make a good referee when he retires.

So it is all happening down in South Wales. There are plenty of us referees down here hoping to reach the big time, just like the players. In the media I am a regular pundit on GTFM regarding rugby union and write a column from time to time for the Evening Post so keep a listen or look out, or even say hello when you see me. We don't all bite!



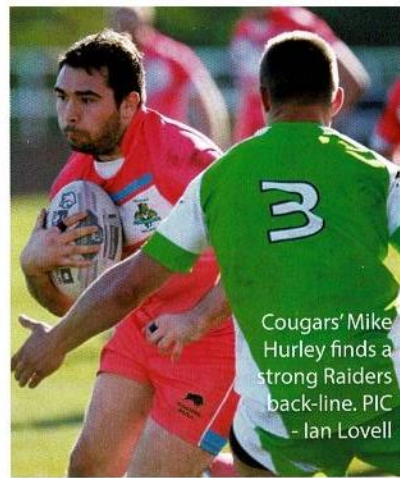
RAIDERS START WELL

THE Raiders couldn't have had a better start to their Conference South season. A win at home to reigning Conference South champions Valley Cougars has meant they've started as they mean to go on.

It was a big win for the Raiders as professional coaching, coupled with a number of Wales under 18 internationals and talented local lads, means that they will be a force to be reckoned with in 2015.

April will be a big test for them as they now have three games on the road and their assistant coach Andrew Thorne knows it will be tough starting with a test at last year's minor premiers Sheffield Hallam Eagles.

"The rest of the board, the coaching staff and I were pleased with how our first game went," he said. "The lads played some good rugby against an experienced Cougars team who had the help of some Scorpions players. The hard work that the lads have put in the last couple of months paid dividends with a convincing win. "However we are under no illusions that we have a long way to go and have to perform as well if not better for the whole season."



Cougars' Mike Hurley finds a strong Raiders back-line. PIC - Ian Lovell

THE RAIDERS 2015

Date	KO/Score	Opponent		
Sun, 15 Feb	14:00	Aberystwyth University (F)	A	W 72-8
Sat, 21 Mar	14:30	Valley Cougars	H	W 34-6
Sun, 29 Mar	14:30	Torfaen Tigers	A	P-P
Sat, 11 Apr	14:30	Sheffield Hallam Eagles	A	
SSat, 18 Apr	14:30	Oxford Cavaliers	A	
Sat, 25 Apr	14:30	Bristol Sonics	A	
Sat, 09 May	14:30	Leicester Storm	H	
Sat, 16 May	14:30	Torfaen Tigers	H	
Sat, 30 May	14:30	Valley Cougars	A	
Sat, 06 Jun	14:30	Nottingham Outlaws	A	
Sat, 20 Jun	14:30	Bristol Sonics	H	
Sat, 27 Jun	14:30	Gloucestershire Warriors	H	
Sat, 04 Jul	14:30	Coventry Bears A	A	
Sat, 18 Jul	14:30	Sheffield Hallam Eagles	H	
Sat, 25 Jul	14:30	Nottingham Outlaws	H	
Sat, 01 Aug	14:30	Leicester Storm	A	
Sat, 15 Aug	14:30	Gloucestershire Warriors	A	
Sat, 22 Aug	14:30	Coventry Bears A	H	
Sat, 05 Sep	14:30	Oxford Cavaliers	H	

THE BIG MATCH - SATURDAY 18TH APRIL VALLEY COUGARS v SHEFFIELD HALLAM EAGLES TRESHARRIS RFC. KICK-OFF 2.30PM

Valley Cougars' director of rugby **Paul Emanuelli** looks back at their first two games of the Conference League South season and ahead to a big month of April...

IT'S been a busy start to the season for Valley Cougars. Plenty going on behind the scenes and an indifferent start on the field.

We've new head coaches in Daf and Steve, I've got a new role that I'm looking forward to, and the committee has grown.

We started with an away match at the newly formed Raiders, and all credit must go to Andy Thorne who's created a great set up for them. They had a lot of my Wales under 18s players from last season and are going

to be a very competitive side in this year's league. We lost the game and it hopefully gives my Cougars boys a kick in the right direction!

Against Leicester Storm, we just about managed to scrape a team with us being helped out by several new guys and a good few Scorpions. We got the result we wanted although in the heavy conditions the performance was hard to judge.

It's that time of the year where union decimates our squad but we'll get on with it the same as last year, and as I've told the boys, "you don't win trophies at the start of the season!"

"It's Bristol Sonics away first before our rematch against Sheffield which we're all looking forward to."

VALLEY COUGARS 2015

Date	KO/Score	Opponent		
Sun, 01 Feb	14:00	Leicester Storm (CC1)	H	W 27-22
Sat, 14 Feb	14:00	Oulton Raiders (CC2)	A	L 0-48
Sat, 21 Mar	14:30	The Raiders (West Wales)	A	L 6-34
Sat, 28 Mar	14:30	Leicester Storm	H	W 28-0
Sat, 11 Apr	14:30	Bristol Sonics	A	
Sat, 18 Apr	14:30	Sheffield Hallam Eagles	H	
Fri, 24 Apr	19:30	Torfaen Tigers	A	
Sat, 02 May	14:00	Featherstone Lions	A	
Sat, 09 May	14:30	Gloucestershire Warriors	H	
Sat, 16 May	14:30	Leicester Storm	A	
Sat, 30 May	14:30	The Raiders (West Wales)	H	
Sat, 06 Jun	14:30	Oxford Cavaliers	A	
Sat, 20 Jun	14:30	Coventry Bears A	H	
Sat, 27 Jun	14:30	Nottingham Outlaws	A	
Sat, 04 Jul	14:30	Sheffield Hallam Eagles	A	
Sat, 18 Jul	14:30	Torfaen Tigers	H	
Sat, 25 Jul	14:30	Oxford Cavaliers	H	
Sat, 01 Aug	14:30	Gloucestershire Warriors	A	
Sat, 15 Aug	14:30	Bristol Sonics	H	
Sat, 22 Aug	14:30	Nottingham Outlaws	H	
Sat, 05 Sep	14:30	Coventry Bears A	A	

**THE BIG MATCH - FRIDAY 24TH APRIL
TORFAEN TIGERS v VALLEY COUGARS
CWMBRAN RFC. KICK-OFF 7.30PM**

Torfaen Tigers' chairman **Rob Davies** reflects on their start to the 2015 season and the disappointment of a postponed game...

IT'S been a tough start to the season but that was expected, having been promoted to the Conference South, but we felt we should have come back from Leicester with more after they were reduced to 12 men in the second half. We took the lead but fitness cost us in the end.

Following the disappointment of losing the home game to the Raiders to the weather, we return to the road for our next two games with trips to Nottingham to take on the Outlaws on April 11th, before a Severn Bridge Derby when we travel to Bristol Sonics the following Saturday.

The club finally kick off their home

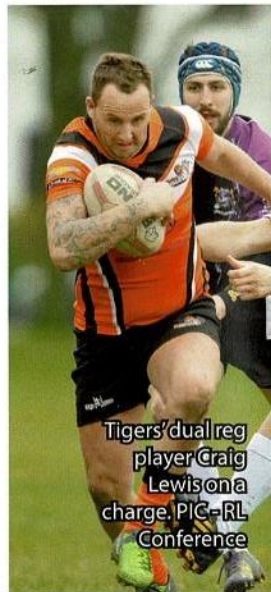
campaign then when we host old rivals Valley Cougars in a Friday Night Lights encounter on April 24th.

We have continued our strengthening process with the return to the club of experienced representative forward Richard Davies. He first appeared for the Tigers as a fresh faced teenager in our inaugural Welsh Conference campaign back in 2003, earning Wales under 18s honours in the process. He then moved to local rivals Newport Titans where he won further honours with Wales Dragonhearts and Wales Students. He returns the club to add further depth to the now infamous Tigers pack.

Meanwhile at junior level, the club has two representative players before a ball has been played with the selection of Garin Price and Brett Thomas in the East Wales under 16s Origin squad.

TORFAEN TIGERS 2015

Date	KO/Score	Opponent		
Wed, 11 Mar	19:45	Cardiff City Rugby League	H	W 44-14
Sat, 21 Mar	14:30	Leicester Storm	A	L 16-28
Sun, 29 Mar	14:30	The Raiders (West Wales)	H	P-P
Sat, 11 Apr	14:30	Nottingham Outlaws	A	
Sat, 18 Apr	14:30	Bristol Sonics	A	
Fri, 24 Apr	19:30	Valley Cougars	H	
Sat, 09 May	14:30	Coventry Bears A	A	
Sat, 16 May	14:30	The Raiders (West Wales)	H	
Sat, 30 May	14:30	Oxford Cavaliers	H	
Sat, 06 Jun	14:30	Sheffield Hallam Eagles	H	
Sat, 20 Jun	14:30	Gloucestershire Warriors	A	
Sat, 27 Jun	14:30	Bristol Sonics	H	
Sat, 04 Jul	14:30	Nottingham Outlaws	H	
Sat, 18 Jul	14:30	Valley Cougars	A	
Sat, 25 Jul	14:30	Leicester Storm	H	
Sat, 01 Aug	14:30	Oxford Cavaliers	A	
Sat, 15 Aug	14:30	Coventry Bears A	H	
Sat, 22 Aug	14:30	Gloucestershire Warriors	H	
Sat, 05 Sep	14:30	Sheffield Hallam Eagles	A	



Tigers' dual reg player Graig Lewis on a charge. PIC-RL Conference

THEY CAME FROM SOUTH WALES #2

Zack Wilson of loverugbyleague.com looks at a former Cardiff great who was recently named Wales RU's seventh greatest winger of all time. Just part of the story...

WHEN reading a book about Welsh rugby union recently, I came across the following quote from none other than Phil Bennett.

"Maurice [Richards] showed he would have been one of the greats had he not gone off to play rugby league."

Far be it from me to argue with an oval ball genius like Bennett, but those words got under the skin somewhat. For some of us, Maurice Richards IS one of the greats.

Born in Ystrad Rhondda in 1945, Richards enjoyed a fine career in rugby union before signing for Salford for a reported £7,000. After winning the first of nine Welsh union caps against Ireland in 1968, Richards was also capped three times by the British Lions in South Africa the same year.

Richards went on to score four tries in a union international for Wales against England in 1969. He equalled a record that still stands, with no player subsequently having crossed for five against the English.

It was that kind of form which was bound to interest scouts from the North of England, that dreaded place full of rugby league men with their tempting barrows of cash. But Richards was not a player who needed much encouragement to consider a future in the 13-a-side code, despite the stigma that often surrounded the game in Wales at that time.

"I was talking to friends about rugby, and the conversation switched to rugby league," he said.

"I made a comment that it would be an interesting challenge if I were to ever change codes. Unknown to me a friend went on to contact Brian Snape at Salford.

"Salford got in touch with me and I went along to Brian's house in Wilmslow in the early hours of October 15th 1969 to sign a contract, and I made my debut that very same day."

Richards brought speed and an eye for the try line with him from rugby union, but he was also known by Salford fans for his great hands, and his ability to concentrate under pressure. He was to lead the Salford try-scoring table for five seasons, and collected a host of winners medals during his time with the Red Devils. Salford would win the Lancashire Cup in 1972, the Floodlit Cup in 1975, and, most significantly, Division One titles in 1974 and 1977. He was also British rugby league's top try scorer in 1975/76 with 37.

The winger called time on his rugby league career in 1983, having clocked up 500 appearances for the Reds, a club record. He also scored 297 Tries and 32 Goals, for a total points tally of 956. His final try was also the first 'four-point try' scored by a Salford player.

International recognition came too, with Richards winning two caps for Great Britain and three for Wales during his time at Salford.

That, in my eyes anyway, makes him one of the true greats. Sorry Phil Bennett.



SWANSEA AIM FOR PROMOTION

SWANSEA University are now aiming for promotion after losing 63-22 to Leeds University in final of the BUCS Trophy, part of Big Wednesday - the finals day for all winter time student sports.

A place in the Premier South is up for grabs but Swansea must beat Brunel, who have also had a good season and Oxford, who finished bottom of Premier South, to try and pinch the latter's spot for the 2015-16 season.

Swansea gave their all in the Leeds game but were up against it from the start after three tries in the first 13 minutes sent Leeds on the way to a comfortable victory, highlighted by a hat-trick for winger Patrick O'Brien.

Swansea, despite an interception try by James Parker, never recovered and were 32-16 adrift at half-time.

Two of O'Brien's three tries were registered in that early blast, with Dominic O'Connor also crossing. Daniel Bent, Benjamin Finder and Jack Blagbrough claimed further scores before the break.

Former South Wales Scorpions player, Cardiff-born Jacob Morgan was first on the scoresheet in the second half for Leeds with further tries going to Blagbrough, Finder, O'Brien, O'Connor and Josh Boardman. Morgan landed seven conversions and Finder kicked a drop goal.

Swansea, meanwhile, posted two tries by Alec Wheatley and a Joe Thomas effort, with Gareth Thomas kicking three goals.

LEEDS: Luka Sypliwczak, Patrick O'Brien, Joey Nellany, Daniel Bent, Matthew Wright, James Woodburn-Hall, Jacob Morgan, Jack Blagbrough, Harry Tabb, Dominic O'Connor; Lawrence Chitil, Benjamin



Wakefield, Benjamin Finder. Subs: Josh Boardman, Clemenston Muchiti, John Beattie, Oliver Urclers.

SWANSEA: Joseph Leadley, Gareth Thomas, Sam Baker, Ben Swift, Joe Thomas, James Parker, Sean Pattimore, Matthew Anderson, Alec Wheatley, Callum Williamson; Adam Rowe, Sam Cook, Louis Ford. Subs: Jack Gourlay, Kyle Garnett, Kieran Cook, David Riley.

PLAY-OFF DATES

Wednesday, 15 April
Brunel vs. Swansea
Saturday, 25 April
Swansea vs. Oxford
Wednesday, 29 April
Oxford vs. Brunel

RESULTS

MARCH 2015

4th Swansea 50 UWE 10
4th Exeter 36 Gloucestershire A 36

CUP SEMI-FINALS

11th Nottingham 18 Leeds 28
11th Gloucestershire 28 Swansea 32

CUP FINAL

25th Leeds 63 Swansea 22

Go to <http://www.bucs.org.uk/bucscore/Search.aspx> for more news on our universities.

SCHOOLS FINALS OPEN BIG WEEKEND

THE Welsh Champion Schools finals will be part of a big weekend of Rugby League in South Wales.

They will take place at Taff's Well RFC on Friday 8th May, just two days before the Big Welsh Derby between South Wales Scorpions and North Wales Crusaders at Cardiff Arms Park.

We already know that Welsh speaking schools Glantaf from Cardiff and Strade from Llanelli will contest the year 7 Final and that Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera have qualified for the Year 8 contest but all other place are still to be decided.

Here is a list of the semi-finals still yet to be played. First side drawn will be play at home.

Year 8 Semi Final

Cwm Rhymini vs. St Josephs (Newport) –
Thursday 23rd April - 1pm

Year 9 Semi Final

Pencoed vs. Strade –
Wednesday 22nd April - 1pm
Cwm Rhymini vs. St Josephs (Newport) –
Thursday 23rd April - 2pm

Year 10 Semi Final

St Josephs (Newport) vs. Glantaf –
Date to be confirmed
Strade vs. Llangynwyd –
Tuesday 21st April - 1pm

Year 11 Semi Final

Pencoed vs. St John's Aberdare –
Wednesday 22nd April - 2pm
St Josephs (Newport) vs. Monmouth –
Friday 24th April - 1pm

March saw some activity in the national Champion Schools competition with Ysgol Y Strade's two sides both going out of the competition.



Glantaf's year 11s beating one Wigan side. Another now awaits. PIC - Ian Golden

Both of their outfits faced Hinchley Wood from London and both fell short, their year 7s losing 38-6 and their year 10s competing in a closer contest, losing 38-34

Glantaf's year 7 side are just two games away from Wembley but they have a tough tie in Hill to start with. Their year 11 side may have knocked out Deanery from Wigan in the quarter-finals but will now have to beat another school in Wigan to get them through to finals day in London, the day before the Challenge Cup Final.

Ystalyfera's year 8 side face a rematch against Brooksbank from Halifax away from home following their defeat to them in last year's neutral ground semi-final clash in Leeds when they were both in year 7.

NATIONAL FIXTURES

Year 7 Quarter Final
Malet Lambert (Hull) vs Glantaf –
Monday April 20th

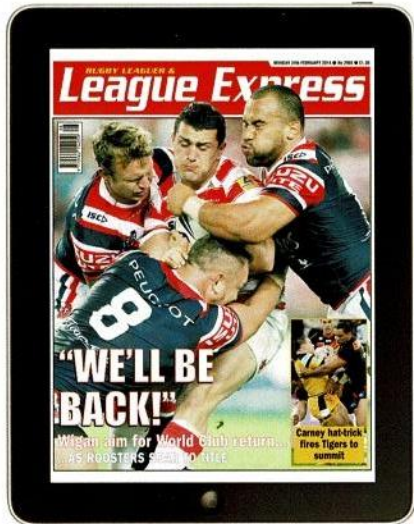
Year 8 Quarter Final
Brooksbank vs Ystalyfera –
Match to be played before Friday 1st May

Year 11 Semi Final
St Edmunds (Wigan) vs Glantaf –
Wednesday 22nd April

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CHAMPIONSHIP TALK

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The Great Easter Debate
By GARETH WALKER of League Express

SHOULD Rugby League players - and in particular part-time players - be asked to play two games in the space of four days over Easter?

It's becoming one of the most prominent debates in the sport and splits opinions wildly.

The Wigan coach Shaun Wane is a firm advocate of it, stressing that it's part of our tradition in this country and is all about preparing players correctly.

Read the Twitter feed of former Warrington stand-off Lee Briars and you'll see he is totally against it - he even labelled it "ludicrous".

But Batley's John Kear has no problems with it - even for part-time players.

Kear told League Express: "It's a very busy time for coaches, clubs and players, and it's all about preparing for and recovering from games.

"These matches their toll definitely - but I'm not moaning about it because I like Easter.

"It's harder for players at this level, but I still think it's okay.

"Part-time players like playing - they don't play because it's their job, they play because they enjoy it.

"For them, they'd rather be playing than training."

"It's a big ask, but something we all enjoy."

One of the most vocal opponents of the schedule in recent years has been the Warrington coach Tony Smith - who doesn't think full-time players should be asked to play twice in a matter of days, never mind part-time ones.

Smith said: "I think there's some really sensible people about, particularly on the Super League side of things that are starting to understand the overall importance of performance rather than the number of games.

"There's an understanding that it needs to be high quality rather than just churning out a number of home and away fixtures for the sake of it.

"If the product is no good, you may as well not put it out, and that understanding is starting to come around.

"I would like to think that the sense part of it will come into action within the next couple of years.

"There are true facts about it and there are some people that are smart enough to start realising that a weekend of really good rugby league would be better than a whole lot of games over a short period of time that most of them are crap.

"Or some are because people can't front up.

"Some people would say you see some upsets but, if you look at the quality of rugby league, it's usually not great."

One things for sure - the debate is unlikely to go away any time soon.

League Express

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A NIGHT WITH THE RUGBY STARS

WALES Rugby League president Mike Nicholas is launching a series of fundraisers for Welsh Conference Rugby League clubs.

The first will be held for Bridgend Blue Bulls on Friday 22nd May at The Hi-Tide Inn, Porthcawl.

This will be a Sportsman's Evening with special guest speakers John Devereux and Andy Gregory while a three course meal will be included.

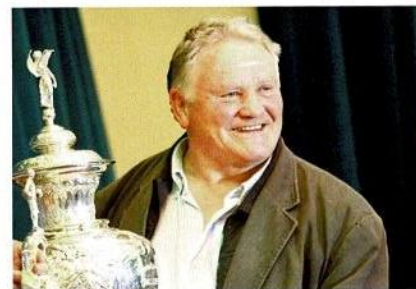
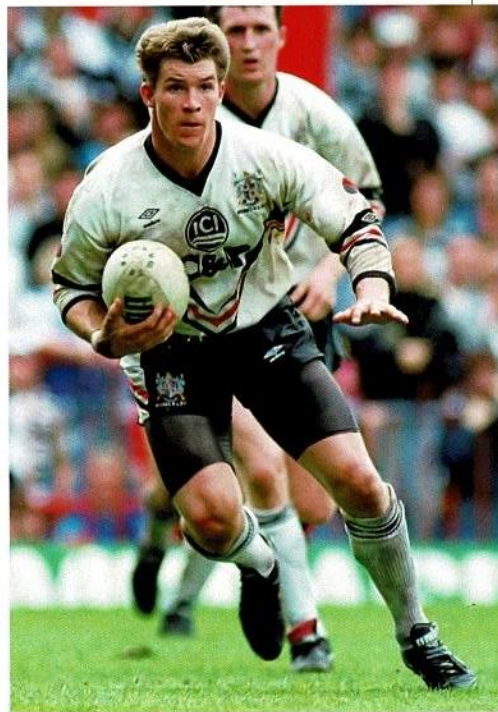
Nicholas will be master of ceremonies and tickets cost just £35 per head with a special offer of £300 for clubs booking a table of ten.

Nicholas said: "This is the first in a series of events we can do for Welsh Conference community clubs. Bridgend Blue Bulls are first

following Stephen Smith's discussions with myself, but anyone can be next. I would love to see fellow clubs helping each other out by booking tables at each other's events and building a great community spirit in Rugby League in Wales. Please contact me if you want your club to be next with a proposal for a date and venue."

Please email tmbullbluebulls@gmail.com or call 07712243581 to buy your tickets.

If you want your club to be next in Mike Nicholas' Rugby League fundraising nights, please contact Nickmanagement@hotmail.com.



THE TALK FROM THE TERRACES

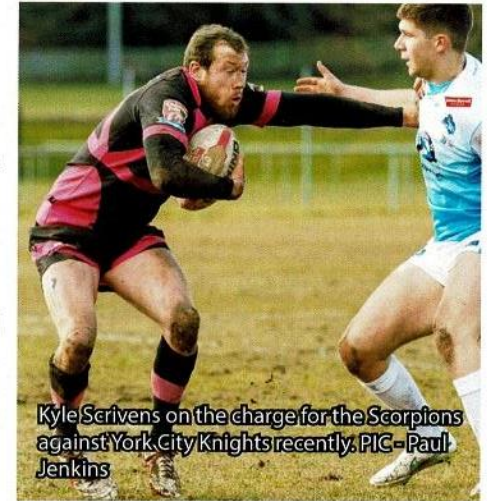
Neil Goodman was behind the video camera for Scorpions' first home game and enjoyed what he filmed...

AND we're off.... the first game of the season at our new home is under our belts, so how did it go? Personally I felt pretty good.

Inevitably when cup draws are made, the usual frenzy of speculation starts with supporters wanting this club or that club, however with ourselves largely it was 'As long as it's a home game!' Fate was indeed kind and we got the home game, but maybe next time we should add 'against any side except for...' with York probably being one to avoid?

However the sun came out and so did local support, with many new faces joining the loyal collective. It was also nice to see so many children in attendance and I have no doubt that many would have thoroughly enjoyed the skills on display. York were certainly out to stampe over the Scorpions and cement their progress to the next round, but a dogged defence and stubborn line caused York to make a number of handling errors early on, denying them an early lead. It was pleasing to see Scorpions fully committed and although York contained the attack and stopped our lads gaining any pace, York progressed but perhaps not on the terms they expected. Neil Dallimore was everywhere and causing all sorts of trouble for the opposition (hats off to whoever talked him out of retirement), and new recruits like Paul Songhurst showing the supporters what they can expect to see over the next few months. The Scorpions were in the game for the full 80 minutes and if only for a short lapse in the final 15 minutes it could have been a lot closer than the score line might suggest.

York have got to be one of the favourites for top spot and I can't see us having much tougher than them so if our boys can turn on a



Kyle Scrivens on the charge for the Scorpions against York City Knights recently. PIC - Paul Jenkins

display like that again then I think a good few teams will be in for quite a surprise.

Elsewhere the Crusaders are shaping up well and progressing in the Challenge Cup after impressive wins against Doncaster and Widnes West Bank and it will be interesting to see how far they progress. Closer to home Cardiff City RL have a couple of mid-week pre-season friendly matches at the Cardiff Arms Park taking on the Welsh Students and Aber Valley Wolves and although the Conference season has yet to start it is fantastic to see the strength of the league this year, especially considering that in seasons gone by it was notorious for cancelled games due to teams being unable to field a full side.

So whilst it's exciting to see what happens at the top divisions, there's plenty of entertainment to be had in the community leagues too. Pop along, have a nose, see what's happening in Mountain Ash, see what's happening with clubs near you, enjoy it, then tell all your friends.

Y GORNEL CYMRAEG

Y mis yma mae **Sian Golden** yn trafod dechrau'r tymor, yn ogystal a chystadleuaeth cadair olwyn yn Wrecsam.

PETH cyntaf sydd gen i i'w ddweud mai trist oedd clywed am farwolaeth cyn-rheolwr tim y Celtic Crusaders, Kevan Tee, a oedd ond yn 53 oed. Roedd yn rhan o'r tim tu ol y llenni yn nhymor cyntaf y Celtic Crusaders yng nghynghrair y Super League nol ym 2009 cyn gadael i sefydlu cwmni teithio. Mae'n sicr y bydd colled fawr ar ei ol, a dwi yn ymestyn cydymdeimlad ar ran Rygbi Cynghrair Cymru i'w deulu a'i ffrindiau.

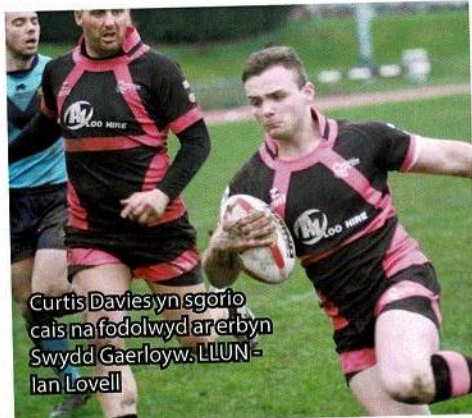
Wel mae'r tymor ar fin dechrau o ddifri ar gyfer South Wales Scorpions, gyda gem gystadleuol gyntaf'r tymor wedi cymryd lle yn Aberpennar (Mountain Ash) ar 8fed o Fawrth.

Er nad oedd y canlyniad yn un ddelfrydol (collodd y Scorpions o 20-4), roedd perfformiad y tim yn un galonogol ac yn rhoi gobaith i'r tymor. Nid oedd yna unrhyw ddisgwyliadau penodol ar gyfer y gem yn ol yr hyfforddwyr; yn wir bron fel sesiwn hyfforddi er mwyn i'r chwaraewyr newydd gael cyfle i adeiladu profiad.

Mae'n braf gweld fod Wrecsam wedi cael ei ddewis i gynnal twrnament 'Spring Slam' rygbi xiii cadair olwyn lle y bydd pedwar tim yn cystadlu - Gravesend Dynamite, Glasgow Panthers, Liverpool Saints ac wrth gwrs North Wales Crusaders. Dyma'r tro cyntaf i gystadleuaeth o'r fath gael ei chynnal yng Nghymru ac mae'r diolch yn mynd i waith diflino Mark Andrew Jones, rheolwr tim North Wales Crusaders yn ogystal a'u tim cadair olwyn. Bydd y gystadleuaeth yn rhad ac am ddim i bawb sydd am ddod i'w cefnogi.

O ran Rygbi Cynghrair Cymru hoffwn ganmol North Wales Crusaders hefyd ar eu perfformiad yn erbyn Rochdale Hornets yn rownd go-gynderfynol Cwpan Cynghrair 1 ddydd Sul 15 Mawrth. Fe drechon nhw un o glybiau hanesyddol rygbi xiii 28-4 mewn perfformiad glinigol ar y Cae Ras. Mae hyn yn newyddion da i'r gamp yng Nghymru oherwydd ein bod yn adeiladu gyda phob her.

Gwynebodd Valley Cougars tim mwyaf



Curtis Davies yn sgorio cais na fodolwyd ar erbyn Swydd Gaerloyw. LLUN-
lan Lovell

diweddar Cynghrair Deheuol yr RFL ar ddydd Sadwrn 21 Mawrth wrth deithio i Raiders RL yng ngorllewin Cymru. Cynhaliwyd yr ornest ym Mharc Stebonheath, Llanelli. Mae'r lleoliad yn un bwysig yn natblygiad rygbi xiii gan mai dyma lle y trechodd tim cenedlaethol rygbi xiii Cymru Ffrainc o 41-7 o flaen 30,000 o bobl yn 1935. Mae hyn yn parhau i fod y nifer fwyaf o bobl i weld y tim cenedlaethol yn chwarae. Mae'r stadiwm eleni yn dathlu 80 mlynedd o rygbi xiii.

Fel a grybwyllais i y tro diwethaf mae'r tymor cynghrair yn dechrau y mis hwn, lle bydd South Wales Scorpions yn gwynebu University of Gloucestershire All Golds (Ebrill 3) a Barrow Raiders (Ebrill 25) i ffwrdd, a chroesawu London Skolars (Ebrill 12) a Oldham Roughyeds (Ebrill 19) i Barc Dyffryn Pennar, Aberpennar. Rydyn yn edrych ymlaen i'r her sydd yn dod i'n rhan a hefyd yn edrych ymlaen i groesawu chwaraewyr, staff a chefnogwyr Llundain ac Oldam i'n cornel bach ni o'r byd!

Hoffwn glywed oddi wrth y siaradwyr Cymraeg yn eich plith. Beth hoffwch chi weld yn y Gornel Cymraeg? Hoffech chi weld trafodaeth ar unrhyw bwnc arbennig? Cysylltwch a mi ar siangolden@scorpionsrl.com.

Croeso i unrhyw gefnogwr rygbi ymuno a ni yn Rhondda Cynon Taf am gyfnod newydd yn hanes y Scorpions, a edrychwn ymlaen i'ch croesawu!

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