LLANELLI -v- GLOUCESTER

SATURDAY, 23rd APRIL, 1988. KICK-OFF 3.00p.m.
IN TOUCH ... The Editorial Page

It is too early yet to make a definitive judgment on the season — that duty will have to await the outcome of events at the National Ground in two weeks' time — but as this is the last home match of the season it might be thought appropriate that I should draw together some thoughts on the highlights of the campaign. Inevitably, perhaps, these must focus to some extent on individual achievements, and two will surely bear comparison with any in the club's history.

From the standpoint of scoring feats, the performances of left-wing Carwyn Davies have been supreme. To have overhauled Andy Hill's record of 39 tries in a season is a remarkable distinction for a popular young player, and his selection for the Welsh tour in New Zealand next month is well-deserved recognition for sterling exploits.

Even more historic has been the belated recognition which has come the way of Phil May. The club's longest-serving player, with a peerless reputation both as a forward and captain, thought long and hard before deciding to extend his rugby career into the present campaign. How unfortunate it would have been if he had retired on the very threshold of the opportunity to establish, at long last, his prowess at an international level. It has been a source of immense satisfaction at Stradey, and in Welsh rugby generally, that Phil played throughout the international campaign and is now to tour New Zealand.

It is an indication of the quality of talent within the club that seven players are going with Wales to challenge the All Blacks, and we wish the famous seven — Ieuan Evans, Carwyn Davies, Jonathan Griffiths, Jonathan Davies, Steve Bowling, Anthony Buchanan and Phil May — a highly successful tour.

Mention of the All Blacks in New Zealand brings us back to thoughts of the forthcoming engagement with the All Blacks in Wales. It is far from ideal that the international players on both sides (and, in this respect, Llanelli are in a clear majority) have to strive to play to their full capacities in a match as important as the Cup Final only a matter of days before flying to New Zealand. Even so, we are sure that the players concerned will recognise the need for a supreme effort to capture further pride and glory in the Cup.

Reference to Carwyn Davies's record scoring deeds reminds me that other Scarlets have turned in some highly meritorious try-scoring performances, and no fewer than six players have run into double figures — Carwyn himself, with 41 tries in 41 games, Ieuan Evans (21 tries in 22 games), Nigel Davies and Jonathan Griffiths (each 18 tries), and Gary Jones (11 tries). Well done, all six.

Another highlight of the season, in a very different way, has been the recent return to active duty of centre Peter Morgan after an absence of eighteen months through injury. That Peter does not intend to allow it to become merely a matter of sentiment and nostalgia has been demonstrated by his composed and effective form in his 'come-back' appearances.

Finally, a warm welcome to Gloucester — a club renowned for the durability and doughtiness of their forward play and the general edge of keen competitiveness in their play overall. We look forward to a hard and exciting tussle to bring down the curtain at Stradey — a prelude to the major climax in Cardiff in a fortnight's time.
TODAY’S TEAM SHEET

LLANELLI

Colin Stephens
Ieuan Evans
Nigel Davies
Peter Morgan
Carwyn Davies
Jonathan Davies
Jonathan Griffiths
Ricky Evans
David Fox
Laurence Delaney
Phil May (Captain)
Russell Cornelius
Gary Jones
Emyr Jones
Mark Perego
Mike Clement
David Crane
John Roberts
Kevin White

GLOUCESTER

Paul Mansell
Derek Morgan
Damien Commins
Andrew Kitchen
Jim Brocas
Mike Hamlin (Captain)
Lloyd Gardner
Malcolm Freesty
Kevin Dunn
Rob Phillips
Nigel Scrivens
John Etheridge
Paul Ashmead
Mike Teague
Andrew Stanley

REPLACEMENTS

Mike Clement
David Crane
John Roberts
Kevin White

Referee: CLIVE NOULING, Swansea

Llanelli R.F.C. gratefully acknowledge the support of today’s match sponsors:

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