



**Llanelli
RFC**

**THE
SCARLETS**

V

GLOUCESTER

Wednesday, 1st October, 1986

Kick-Off 7.00 p.m.

30p

IN TOUCH ... The Editorial Page

One of my recent correspondents, John T. Rees, of Gelli Road, provided me with some interesting insights to rugby at Stradey during World War II. At the time, Mr. Rees worked at the "Klondike", as the Llanelli Steelworks was known, and had among his work-mates a number of committeemen and players connected with the Llanelli Wartime XV. "To name just a few", wrote Mr. Rees, "they included Dick Edmunds, who worked on the furnaces; Dai Lee, the watchman, who was caretaker at Stradey; Gil Evans, the father of Hagen and Peter; Emllyn Badham, who tragically lost his life in an accident in the casting pit; and the most famous of all, and a very quiet gentleman, the great Albert Jenkins."

Mr. Rees reckoned that the best treatment the players received for their aches and pains was at the hands of Dick Edmunds in the heat at the back of the open-hearth furnaces. Games were mostly played for war-time charities, and after-the-match receptions for the teams were held at the Oddfellows Hall, behind the Thomas Arms, and also at the Hospital Annexe in Pembrey Road — now Pentip School.

Mr. Rees's reminiscences also dealt with an occasion pre-war when an international trial match was held at Stradey, and Walter Rees, the secretary of the Welsh Rugby Union, arrived at the ground, chauffeur-driven, with three new rugby balls for use in the match. Through unexplained circumstances, the balls went missing, and the game was played with two replacements which were heavy and slippery after being immersed in a bath-tub on the ground. In this state they were thought to be better suited to the Llanelli players taking part in the trial! The new balls were "found" shortly before the W.R.U. secretary left for home.

So much for the ingenuity of those behind the scenes at Stradey fifty years ago. The communal bath-tub has gone; so have the leather balls, complete with bladders, that made kicking so difficult on heavy grounds. Perhaps some of the fun that "characters" brought to the game has disappeared, too.

Something that has not been lost is the tradition of rivalry between Llanelli and many of their long-standing opponents. Among them are Gloucester, who first played the Scarlets exactly one hundred years ago this season. My own recollections of rugby at Kingsholm go back to the immediate post-war years when the England full-back, Bill Hook, personified the staunchness and durability of Gloucester rugby.

Not only for reasons of tradition, but in the expectation of a rousing and wholehearted challenge, we welcome Gloucester warmly. Perhaps we can be forgiven for being partisan to the extent that we hope the Scarlets maintain the form that brought them an away victory over another famous West Country club, Bath, last weekend. It ended a run of disappointing results and perhaps gives a better indication of the Scarlets' long-term prospects.

GARETH HUGHES

LLANELLI

MARTIN GRAVELLE
PETER HOPKINS
IEUAN EVANS
PETER MORGAN
CARWYN DAVIES
KEVIN THOMAS
JONATHAN GRIFFITHS
ANTHONY BUCHANAN
DAVID FOX
SEAN GALE
PHIL MAY (Captain)
RHYS THOMAS
ALUN HOPKINS
JULIAN WILLIAMS
DAVID PICKERING

Nigel Davies
Kerry Townley

V

No.

15
14
13
12
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Replacements

GLOUCESTER

TIM SMITH
JIM BREEZE
RUARI MACLEAN
PAUL TAYLOR
RICHARD MOGG
MIKE HAMLIN
RICHARD WILLIAMS
MALCOLM PREEDY (Captain)
KEVIN DUNN
RICHARD PASCALL
JOHN BRAIN
JOHN ETHERIDGE
BOB FOWKE
MIKE TEAGUE
ANDREW STANLEY

Lloyd Gardner
Kevin White

Referee: Mr. WINSTON JONES, Ammanford