
AWST 2009 AUGUST email edition

Auckland Welsh Club Newsletter

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Auckland Welsh Four Nations Rugby.

College Rifles Rugby Club

12th September

19th September

26th September

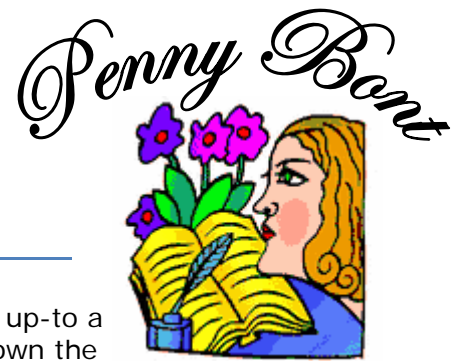
Players required please contact Dai Campbell (021 466144) or B-J Partridge (021 2941078) if you want to join in the camaraderie.

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A Welsh Birds Eye View 2

Awright then? How's it going?

I am tidy, thanks for asking. Although I must confess not been up-to a lot this month, other than hard out supporting the Lions Boy down the pub.

Obviously I was gutted that the Lions boys lost 2-1 to the South Africans, but boyo what a test series. Chuffed to bits I am, that Jamie Roberts won the Player of the Series – Tidy!

I feel I also have to give a big mention to Adam Jones, who showed the "Beast" (who Ad had turned into a pussycat at the scrum) you don't mess with Swansea boys ever! made of. The only thing I thought Ad needed was a back brace due to way he was carrying the "Beast" in his back pocket! So a big cwttch goes out to Ad who is now out injured for six months – gutting! L

Well it is coming around to that time of year again for that annual 'welsh saga' to be played out once again; of will they, won't they be released for the Autumn Internationals. Did last year's farce not damage the welsh reputation enough? I only have one thing to say about this – SORT IT OUT!! So we can have a cracking tournament! So what else has been occurring?

Well Kardiff has a brand new rugby and football stadium that the Blue Birds and the Kardiff Blues boys are going to be sharing (what this space to see how that pans out?)

This state of the art stadium is based on Leckwith Road and can seat up to 25,000 supporters! Tidy, can't wait to hear the supporters singing at a sell out match!

The Blue Birds won their first match 4-1, so over to the rugby boys to do the same.

Talking about cracking football performances! A special mention has to be given to the Dragons boys last game a couple of weeks ago, they were playing so well, that it incensed the referee to see red lose his rag completely and lay into one of our lads! Unbelievable, never seen a ref do that before! All I am going to say "Hand of Respect Lads" Go the Dragons!!

On a final sporting note, personally never being a lover of the cricket scene nor ever will be, as the idea of sitting around for 5 days to find out who won, would do my head in!

Anyway, fair play to Cricket Association for hosting the Ashes for the first time ever at Sophia Gardens. I didn't recognise the grounds as they looked so lush.

A welcome break from the Lions madness was meeting all the Treorchy Boys who were over doing a tour of New Zealand. I thoroughly enjoyed the 'official gig' but had a cracking time down the pub later at the Muddy Farmer where they drank the bar dry! Another cracking bloke that was touring through NZ was Bryn Terfel; he put in a surprise visit down the Welsh Dragon for hours!

Hot off the welsh press:

Ryan Jones has got married this month which has left some female rugby supporters heartbroken. For me, it is a huge relief that he has finally moved on. (As I know secretly he has been hoping I would return to Wales, but like said, Ryan, it was never going to work end of! After eight years of dating she is a tidy bird, you needs to make an honest woman out of her).

Congratulations to Shaney Williams on the birth of his baby boy and a new welsh winger for the future! Nice one Shaney!

Gutting that Russell T Davies is leaving Doctor Who I do hope this doesn't mean that they no longer going to be filming it in Wales, as I love playing spot the location.

Well finishing off must say, I am not going to lie here, I am glad that Wales is finally enjoying some lush weather for once over the last month, which is well deserved like. Rhyl recorded a staggering 27 Celsius or 81 Fahrenheit!! Who would have sorted Rhyl being hot stuff!! J On that note, that's all I have to say on the matter, yes I will confess this month's edition has been rugby orientated but what of it?

So I will say tarrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrraaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa. See you all down the pub.

End of!

VIEW FROM THE NEST



Sorry about the delay in the last month or two, there has been a lot of sickness in the Nest, unfortunately it has been the young bird instead of the old one this time. Hopefully normal services will resume in September. We have a lot to catch up on, so we will make it brief. The British and Irish Lions tour of South Africa where the Welsh players in particular were the backbone, this bodes well for the future in particular the NZ tour next year and the World Cup in two years. There is a concern that I have with the game that I love that has become foremost in my mind following this Lions tour and subsequent events. The thuggery of the Springboks which has been publicly announced by their coach which caused the hospitalization of many of the Welsh Players and Brian O'Driscoll. The referees and boards allowing eye-gouging to carry on with little or no punishment. Not even a red card given. I am very worried that someone will be seriously maimed or killed on an international rugby pitch. It is now more than a game worldwide, this has been reflected by my friend Dai Vinci when in a schoolboy game in Canada one of the children was eventually convicted of manslaughter for injuries causing death resulting from a spear tackle. In the last couple of weeks we have the disgrace that was the Auckland Grammar School and Kelston Boys High School rugby semi final and the brawl that ensued as the game was reaching its conclusion. I believe that the young people that are watching these internationals and are emulating their idols, This behaviour is also going into other sports, our team the Red Dragons has been attacked by another side, that other side has also attacked other teams quite violently, it is our responsibility as parents of children and young men to guide them in the right way of life. Sport is a wonderful connective thing for many people. This violence that is pervading society has to stop.

The future of the welsh club looks very bright, we have organized an alliance with the Irish and Scottish societies to have many events planned over the next two or three years. We have also struck an alliance with Teachers Eastern Rugby Club where they will be the supporters club for Welsh followers and they are very enthusiastic of coming alongside us with our very positive and visionary committee. A lot will be achieved, more than most people at this stage can imagine. For example our connections to the Welsh Team, good club man Tucker is actually having a pint with Shane Williams this weekend, where he will discuss them coming to see us as a club over the next two years. The possibilities are endless.

There are a couple of events organized which are covered briefly in the newsletter, this Saturday 29th August we have a Poems and Pints Night in the London Bar (CBD) 6:30pm start. Check out the Front Page for the dates of the Four Nations Rugby which will be held over three weekends in September. Also the Celtic Tri-Nations event which will be held at Rocky Nook Bowls Club on October 10, more details next newsletter.

Catch you later

Barrie P

DAI VINCI RETURNS!!!!

WALES TOUR TO CANADA AND THE U.S.A.



As the Canadian national anthem was being played a flock of geese flew over the ground in V formation.

“That’s very impressive organisation” I said smiling at my friend.
“It’s the Canadian Air Force” he replied.

This was the relaxed mood prior to the Canada v Wales rugby test match played at the Keele University sports ground in Toronto on May 30th. With the local sports pages dominated by news of the Toronto Blue Jays baseball team and the play offs for ice hockey’s Stanley Cup, the rugby test match had limited coverage. Therefore the match attendance of 8,500 was deemed satisfactory.

With their 15 leading players with the British and Irish Lions in South Africa this was a second or development Welsh team. The Canadian team had Welsh and New Zealand connections. Their Director of Rugby is former Cardiff Blues coach Geraint John and their coach Kevin Crowley former Taranaki and All Black full back.

The Canadian team were very competitive in the game scoring 2 well constructed tries. Their weakness was the scrum where loose head prop Duncan Jones had his opponent in permanent reverse gear. Wales always had something in hand and with their extra experience ran out 32 – 23 winners in a scrappy game.

Impressive Ospreys outside half Dan Biggar kicked all his goals, controlled the game admirably and was voted man-of-the-match. Captain Ryan Jones returned to form, Scarlet Jonathan Davies shone in the centre and powerful Cardiff Blues wing Tom James always threatened although hampered by the narrow pitch.

The following weekend it was on to Toyota Park, Bridgeview, Chicago the home of Chicago Fire soccer team. Located 10 miles south of downtown Chicago, this new stadium hosted the USA v Wales rugby test on June 6th attended by 6,500 spectators with the usual high proportion being Welsh.

The game started disastrously for Wales with Captain Ryan Jones being concussed in the first minute. He left the field after 20 minutes and was soon followed by injured openside flanker Robin Sowden-Taylor. The make shift back row contained replacement flanker Sam Warburton and replacement hooker

Richard Hibbard. Both rose to the occasion magnificently, contributing to a much improved performance by Wales who ran out 48-15 winners.

Again the Welsh scrum dominated, the line out gave clean ball and the backs ran with skill, pace and purpose. Experienced half backs Dwayne Peel and Nicky Robinson showed their class giving control and direction to the game.

Replacements who gained their first Welsh caps were Ospreys centre Jonathan Spratt, who had a season with Taranaki in New Zealand last year, and Ospreys tight head prop Craig Mitchell.

The tour was managed by Robin McBryde and Neil Jenkins as all the Welsh coaching team were with the Lions in South Africa. I believe this was a mistake as either Welsh coach Warren Gatland or backs coach Rob Howley should have been on this North American tour.

Nevertheless the tour was deemed a success giving valuable experience to the younger players. From a personal point of view it was a most enjoyable tour having enjoyed the hospitality and company of so many Welsh exiles.

NEWS FROM WALES

The sad news is the death of Welsh rugby great Bleddyn Williams MBE aged 86. Known as 'The Prince of Welsh Centres' Bleddyn captained club and country to victory over the 1953 All Blacks. With great friend and centre partner Dr Jack Mathews he also toured New Zealand with the 1950 Lions.

Belated congratulations to Joe Calzaghe on his retirement from boxing. His record of 46 fights and 46 wins speaks for itself. In the ring he out boxed and out fought everyone. On 4 occasions he was knocked down in the first round but always came back to win. One of Britain's greatest ever boxers and Wales's greatest ever sportsman both in and out of the ring.

One person who never gets the publicity she deserves is Welsh cyclist Nicole Cooke from Wick in the Vale of Glamorgan. She is the Olympic and World Champion the only cyclist to ever hold both titles at the same time. Let us rejoice in the fact the world's best female cyclist is Welsh.

LIONS TOUR OF SOUTH AFRICA

Following the first test in Durban there were 2 headlines in the local newspaper:

The first headline stated that the local pubs in Durban ran out of beer, not once but twice during the match day owing to the thirsty Lions supporters. Considering most of the Lions supporters were Welsh this was somewhat predictable.

The second headline was 'Beauty of the beast'. This referred to Springbok loose head prop Tendai 'The Beast' Mtawarira an iconic figure in South African rugby. His constant disruption of the Lions scrum by hoisting Lions prop Phil Vickery skywards was seen as a major contribution to the Springbok victory. The Beast was voted man-of-the-match. Phil Vickery, a Cornishman, went on to restore his credibility in the third test.

The total dominance of the Springboks in the first hour saw them heading for a comfortable victory. The remarkable Lions comeback in the last 20 minutes nearly snatched victory. This offered great encouragement for the following week's second test match.

Flying into Cape Town the following Monday morning we were greeted by rain and mist which continued throughout the week. Table Mountain was not visible at all for the first 2 days. The Tuesday night game against the Emerging Springboks at Newlands resulted in an 11 – 11 draw in the swirling wind and heavy showers. The Lions fielded a shadow 15 with the likely test players rested.

I stayed in the superb Victoria and Alfred hotel located on the Cape Town Waterfront. This is a protected area away from the large criminal element which plagues all South African cities and towns. The excellent shopping malls and restaurants were full of Lions supporters. The favourite pubs Mitchell's and Quay Four resounded to the singing and laughter of Lions fans and many former players every night. I thoroughly enjoyed this atmosphere and the comforts of a local lady named Monica.

On Friday I flew up to Johannesburg for the second test. For the next 12 days I stayed with some close Afrikaan friends who I have known from previous visits. Their sound advice, welcome and hospitality can only be described as superb. The traditional braie (barbeque) followed by many beers on Friday night at Danie's Pub gave me the chance to link up with some old friends and make some new ones.

The second test was at Loftus Versfeld, Pretoria, home of Super 14 Champions the Blue Bulls. This has become one of my favourite grounds for watching test rugby. Next to the ground was the huge Castle Lager sponsored beer garden which was teeming with red shirted Lions supporters, enjoying the music and supping large quantities of cool lager beer in the endless warm sunshine.

The Lions outplayed the Springboks for much of the game only for that heartbreaking moment when Morne Steyn kicked that last minute penalty to win the game 25 – 22. I felt gutted, the best team had lost. Later that evening I was consoled by friends at another splendid braie. Here I met a homesick Welshman named David and his charming wife Eva Marie. I christened him Dai Porthcawl for obvious reasons.

The following week we headed 400 km west to a family friend's farm close to the Kalahari. We were royally entertained for 4 days by a great Afrikaan character known as Stefan the Terrible. He proudly showed us around his huge farmlands where he grows maize, corn and paprika. We also visited a neighbour's lion's compound. It was real lions this time and just 2 metres away. I warned this lion if he bit me I would bite him back. He took no notice but I must confess there was an electric fence between us.

On to another impressive stadium Ellis Park, Johannesburg, for the third and final test. The weather was disappointedly cloudy. Justice was the word that came to mind as the Lions comfortably beat the Springboks 28-9. The estimated 25,000 red shirted Lions supporters cheered themselves hoarse. Paradoxically it was the team who lost the series 1-2 who celebrated most. After all, they scored most points and scored most tries in the series. They were accurately labelled 'The Unlucky Lions'.

With the forthcoming Tri-Nations in mind, the third test performance of the Springboks was poor, lacking any obvious game plan. The Springboks still have world class players; however coach Peter de Villiers with his strange selections and ridiculous post match comments seems out of his depth at this level.

In South Africa the high crime rate increases and the political quota systems affect even their sports. Nevertheless the Lions tour 2009 was a wonderful experience leaving me with lifelong friends and memories.

CYMRU AM BYTH!
DAI VINCI

FUTURE EVENTS

Sat 29th August

Poems and Pints

London Bar from 6:30pm

\$5 door charge plus raffle.

Harpist and Folk Band, Poem
And Limerick competition.

See flyer for details.

15th September

The Auckland Welsh Choir

will be performing at St Michael's,

Remuera, to be recorded for Praise Be.

Support from our usual quarters is always
welcome and appreciated. The performance
starts at 8.30pm.

Committee Contact Details

(all correspondence to be directed to Secretary)

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Committee

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Meredydd Barrar	836 6389
Derek Williams	833 4177

Next Committee Meeting: 7:30pm 14th
September 2009, Galbraiths Alehouse, Members
welcome.

**Please Note: The Clubs new contact details are
as follows.**

Postal: PO Box 19555, Avondale, Auckland

Email: aucklandwelshclub@gmail.com

Website: www.aucklandwelshclub.com

Celtic Tri-Nations

October 10th 2009

Rocky Nook Bowls Club

Food by Flaming Mo's

6:30pm Start

A games night with Scottish and Irish Societies. Come along and Wales dominate like we did last year.

If you are in need of assistance at any time, or know of any member who may need a bit of help or support, can you please contact a committee member. We cannot help you if we don't know where help is needed.

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Thanks to the contributors to this newsletter who included: Barrie Partridge, B-J Partridge, John Dowden and DB. If you wish to have an article or opinion in the next newsletter please forward it to the club email address: aucklandwelshclub@gmail.com