



# Black & Amber Alliance

## Issue 7

[www.fonr.co.uk](http://www.fonr.co.uk)

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**Welcome** to Issue 7 of the Black & Amber Alliance. As always we would welcome your comments.

### Diary Date

FoNR is pleased to announce its **AGM**; this is to be held on **Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2008**. The meeting will start at 7.00pm and will be held in the clubhouse at Rodney Parade.

The meeting is open to all members of FoNR, we will also have membership forms available on the night should you not currently be a member.

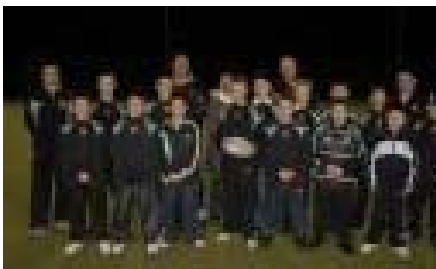
During the course of the meeting several existing committee members will be standing for re-election. Anybody else wishing to stand for election should contact FoNR secretary Kevin Jarvis with the names of their "proposer and seconder."

Kev's email address appears at the top of this page, alternatively you can write to him at;

FoNR  
C/o Newport RFC Ltd  
Rodney Road  
Newport  
NP19 0UU

**We look forward to seeing you there.**

### Community News



Following the Trusts Sponsorship of Caerleon U12 this season, members of the committee were invited up to Caerleon to see the team in training. The

Trust provided funding towards training and kit for the team and along with the commitment of a dedicated coaching team, they are having a successful

season. It was a cold and wet evening but the turnout was good. Luckily Caerleon are able to use the Astroturf pitch at the neighbouring school to save their pitch. We were joined by Newport wing Will Kershaw-Naylor who the Trust has sponsored this season as their community player. He made the trip all the way from Bristol to meet up with the youngsters.

FoNR were pleased to be able to invite Pill under 10 RFC to Rodney Parade to see Newport beat



Bridgend. We are keen to forge links between our club and neighbouring clubs who are instrumental in developing the

game in Newport and the surrounding area. By doing this, Newport Supporters can truly claim to appreciate the work done, mostly by volunteers, parents, teachers and many others to bring on the talent that is available. FoNR see this as vital to the future of rugby in Newport. The weather wasn't the best and they had to stand in the rain for quite a while waiting for the delayed kick off.

If you have youngsters who are keen to play rugby at any level, please contact the Trust Committee who can provide contact details for local clubs who run age group teams.



## Meet the Hon. Secretary Newport RFC

Black & Amber Alliance was delighted to meet up with **Mr Dennis Bennett**, the Honorary Secretary of Newport RFC, here are some of his thoughts and recollections.

Gateway Rugby, is a relatively recent idea, however Dennis started watching Newport due to an early fore-runner. Today players visit the local schools to meet with and coach the youngsters, in Dennis' schooldays the players were amateurs. Newport, Wales & British Lion, Ken Jones, was PT teacher, so in 1954 young Dennis made his first visit.



Ken Jones OBE

However it wasn't until the early 70's that Dennis became a regular supporter, since that time he has missed very few matches following the first XV, Newport Youth, U21's & united whenever possible. He became a member of the club in 1977, later taking the opportunity to purchase life membership. Mary his wife being a relative newcomer joining in 1978! When asked about his best rugby memories,



he immediately went back to those early years of supporting Newport. Top of the list was the 1977 Welsh Cup Final, it was a Newport team full of character that went as underdogs to Cardiff's own ground but still managed to come away victorious. Dennis' favourite players also come from that era,

Keith Poole, Roger Powell and David Waters. When pressed to name his favourite from a later era perhaps unsurprisingly he came up with Gary Teichman "not a big bruising no. 8, but a good skilful, rugby playing linkman who changed my view of the perfect no.8."

Worst moments were cup defeats at Penclawdd and at home South Wales Police. Dennis also highlighted 10 years of being beaten, home and away, by Pontypool. (When put in that context this season isn't that bad!)

Dennis was Chairman of the Official Supporters Club, a position he held with great distinction for four years. I asked about his greatest achievement in that role, fully expecting his leadership of the campaign to have Newport in the regional side's name, to be the answer. Surprisingly to me it was the growth of SC membership, culminating in 1111 members in one season. This was helped by the insistence of all 7 bus full's of supporters travelling to a cup match at Bonymaen that season being paid up members. The clubhouse prior to that trip was chaotic, with queues both for membership and bus travel tickets!

Dennis has also busied himself with roles as Chairman of Governors at Somerton Junior School, helping the Citizens Advice Bureau. Here at Rodney Parade he has been heavily involved with the restoration and display of memorabilia, and also the tremendous restoration work, and rededication of the Memorial Gates.

Hon. Secretary is an unpaid position, the duties being a link between Newport RFC and the WRU, and other clubs. He is responsible for all correspondence including player transfer & registration documentation. Also representing the club at District A & Premier Club meetings.

Dennis stated that he wishes to bring "fresh ideas and make a difference, however after a while it will need new blood." **It will take someone pretty special to fill his shoes when he decides to finally retire. Thank you "Your Honour!"**





**Away Travel:** The Supporters' Club continues to arrange transport to all Newport RFC away matches, as well as selected Newport Gwent Dragons games subject to demand from our members. We are currently arranging coaches to the following games:

**Sat 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2008**

**Cross Keys RFC v Newport RFC**

**Sat 5<sup>th</sup> April 2008**

**Ebbw Vale RFC v Newport RFC**



**Sat 12<sup>th</sup> April 2008**

**Neath RFC v Newport RFC**

**Sat 19<sup>th</sup> April 2008**

**Llanelli RFC v Newport RFC**

Places on the coaches can be booked at any home game or by contacting the Newport Ticket Office in person or by telephoning Newport 670690. Travel on the coach is for members only but non-members should book their place and then join 'on the day'.

**How To Join:** Membership of Newport Rugby Official Supporters Club still costs just £3.50 for adults and £2 for juniors and seniors and that includes a free 'only with membership' lapel badge! Application Forms can be downloaded from our website and returned by post or completed in person at the Supporters' Club table in the Rodney Hall at any home game.

**Player of the Month:** Any supporter can vote each month for the player that you believe deserves to receive the Player of the Month award.

Recently, the presentations were made to the winners of the awards for November and December. As it happened, the same player won the award for both months – Newport RFC hooker, Andrew Brown.

Andrew was presented with his two awards following the Llanharan game on 26<sup>th</sup> January by Falklands War hero, Simon Weston OBE.



The Supporters' Club also sponsor the Newport Gwent Dragons Player of the Month awards and the presentation was recently made to December winner, Joe Bearman.



**Help Us:** We currently have a number of vacancies on the Supporters' Club committee and we would welcome hearing from any member who feels that they can give the time and commitment to help run the Supporters' Club. If you are interested, visit our match day table in the Rodney Hall.

**Social Events:** The Supporters' Club once again arranged the highly popular New Years Eve party in the Rodney Parade clubhouse and supporters enjoyed a live band, disco and party atmosphere to see in 2008.



We have organised a fund-raising evening in aid of St Anne's Hospice on Saturday, 5<sup>th</sup> April. There will be a live band, disco and some of the Newport RFC and Newport Gwent Dragons players will be attending. Tickets are now on sale from any committee member.

**Match Day Mascots:** Our junior members have the chance to be a mascot at Newport RFC matches.



Speak to any member of the Supporters' Club or FONR committee to nominate a mascot for future games.

**Thanks to our Editor:** We would like to thank Dave Tingey for all his hard work in putting together this newsletter. Without his commitment and support, you would not be reading this publication today! Cheers Dave.



## The Chairman Speaks

We must thank Newport RFC Chairman Will Godfrey for taking time out of his busy schedule to have a chat with Black & Amber Alliance. We found him having his back manipulated by the club physios - problems caused he claims by carrying the weight of expectation of the Newport supporters Will went to school with Keith Jarrett and first started watching Newport RFC in the early sixties, then took a short break from regularly watching to play the game at junior level himself. During one of the clubs “difficult times” Will was asked to help out with the running of the club, this led on to his current position of responsibility. It was an invitation that Will had to accept as he desperately wanted to see Newport RFC succeed.

When asked about his best moments watching Newport he gave an unexpected reply, it wasn't the cup finals or any off the European adventures. It was the more everyday events, like standing in the pouring rain at rarely visited places like Treorchy watching the lads win a difficult game, the “crack” with the players and coaching staff. He did however have fond memories of the team that won the inaugural premiership title, stating that the camaraderie amongst that squad was something special. One final piece of special joy was “any time we beat Pontypool,” that's a sentiment many can agree with!

As Chairman Will is involved in overseeing all aspects of Newport RFC, he is also on the board of Rodney Parade Ltd, this brings responsibilities for the regional side as well. The two entities have the same board and work closely together, this helps to keep an overall perspective. Will stated that it was important to view each situation that arose from both sides, finally

arriving at a decision that gave overall benefit. On the playing side Will stressed that he was keen to build on the relationship between the coaches of both the club and the region.

Will spends a great deal of time liaising between the board and the Newport RFC coaches, physios, and backroom staff. He is always available to discuss their needs and to try and help them achieve their aims. Giving advice and support is a major factor, but the final decisions on playing matters remain with them.

On a typical home match day his involvement starts when he arrives around mid morning when he liaises with Mark or James of the stadium management and confirms that both the ground and stadium are fully prepared. From then on it's time to check with the coaching staff that there are no problems, welcoming the visiting team and their management. There are also the match officials to consider, they must be welcomed and their comfort and safety is of paramount importance. As time presses on to kick off Will also has to field the demands of supporters and the press, all the time keeping a watchful eye on the gradually filling stadium. The game brings some respite, halftime however often means being pressed into some form of service again. After the game the work starts again, looking after the officials and visitors ensuring they get fed and watered and listening to the supporters. Should there be any disciplinary matters that need attending to then the liaising



between club and officials is again down to the chairman. Worst case scenario and we have players who need hospital treatment, once again it's up to Will to ensure they have the necessary transport there, and to

ensure to that they are not left stranded. Its usually well into the evening before the chairman finally gets the chance to relax.

Away matches are slightly less troublesome, these normally allow for some relaxation, even to the extent of being able to stop off on the way home for “a soft drink” with the lads!

The job is all year round, currently the coaches are busy Building next years playing squad, both searching for potential new talent and retaining

existing players. Once these have been identified it is the chairman's responsibility, along with the secretary, to get them contracted. The WRU do an extensive annual audit of all clubs either in or wishing to join the premiership. This audit is far more far reaching than just the standard of the pitch and stadium. I can report that after this audit Newport RFC passed with flying colours, gaining all but 3 of the 200 marks available and those were deducted because the WRU felt there were insufficient "turnstiles".!



The redevelopment of Rodney Parade is a major project that Will is fully involved with, he was pleased to be able to confirm that the progress of this

project was on schedule. The bulk of the designs are in place, with only details left to be finalised. This has been a huge effort and the relationship with the local council has been first class throughout. A planning application to the authorities will be made at the end of March or soon after. Prior to that application the board will embark on a series of consultations with the local public, residents and the shareholders of the Club. There will be displays of the plans at the ground which will be accessible to all. The date of the Newport RFC annual general meeting is soon to be finalised, a presentation to the shareholders of the development and its benefits will be made at that meeting, Will stressed that he was keen to hear the views of the shareholders at that meeting.

The new ground will have a capacity of 15000, a deliberate decision had to be made to build a Rugby stadium, as opposed to football, which has allowed for terracing to be included. This is primarily as a result of consultation with supporters groups such as FoNR. Built into the ground will be student flats and residential apartments, hotel accommodation and retail outlets. There will be a large training barn, gym, weights etc. and the current squash club will also be incorporated. These facilities will be made available to the local community and resident whenever they are not required by the rugby club. As they will remain in the ownership of Newport RFC it is expected that they will generate an

income that will enable Newport Rugby to move forward to the benefit of both sides.

The other area of recent speculation has been the venue of future regional and club matches when building starts in January 2009. Will confirmed that the work had been planned in phases that should enable the ground to be available to both sides while the building progressed. It is hoped that with the promised help of the rugby authorities that no match would have to be relocated. However it may mean that both sides play their home matches half a dozen weeks on the trot, then have a spell of several weeks playing away. Whilst not being perfect this is a far better proposition than having to play home matches at other more distant locations.

Will wished to acknowledge the team of people that he has around him to run Newport RFC, office staff and management, ground staff and those on the refreshment side of things. Particular reference was made regarding Tina and her team regarding the excellent Faggots & Chips!

I am also extremely pleased to be able to report that, unprompted, Will paid tribute to the work and presence of FoNR. Obviously he was delighted with the financial input that is made, but he was also keen to stress their value as a "sounding board." The old system of committee rule had its disadvantages and the running of the club was now far more streamlined. However he stated that the old system did provide a method of keeping in touch with the support base. He was very pleased to state that he welcomed the opportunity of consulting on certain matters with bodies such as FoNR, finding their input invaluable.

### **Financial Services**

For **no obligation** advice on Investment Planning, Estate Preservation, Mortgages, & all insurance needs, contact

Dugdale Taylor & Co,  
7, Oak Tree Court.

Cardiff Gate Business Park,  
Cardiff, CF23 8RS  
Tel 02920 547067

Email [davidtingey@dugdaletaylorandco.com](mailto:davidtingey@dugdaletaylorandco.com)

Sponsors of Scott Williams & Mike Hook

**Quote FoNR we receive a payment**





# Black & Amber Bullion



**BLACK & AMBER BULLION** is a monthly jackpot draw with major cash prizes on offer. Monthly payments are automatically collected from your bank via standing order they start from as little as £5 per month.

50% of the income raised is returned in prize money, the remainder is used by Friends of Newport Rugby, to the benefit of Rugby in Newport. This may take the form of sponsorship of local community youth rugby, providing equipment to Newport RFC, or capital expenditure on a larger project that will benefit all users of Rodney Parade. Examples of these projects are the improved floodlighting, refurbished clubhouse toilets and the improvements made to the clubhouse lounge bar.

**Please join now, for just the price of a half of Lager a week or one cigarette a day you can make a difference!**



The first draw of 2008 was performed by Newport RFC players Craig Hill, Nathan Williams and Gethin Robinson. Congratulation to the winners;

- 1st (£300) - Peter Callaghan
- 2nd (£75) - Christian Rose
- 3rd (£25) - M Howard

**Craig Hill Performs the First Prize Draw.**

The Christmas Super draw of the Bullion took place at the Cross Keys game and the following lucky winners were drawn;

- 1st (£500) - Mr J Bedding
- 2nd (£125) - Mr B Owens
- 3rd (£75) - Mrs H Kershaw Naylor
- 4th (£50) - Mr Wayne Williams
- 5th (£25) - Mr K Yates



**Adam Frampton and Stuart Maguire make the draw**



The prize money has moved on since the first draw in October 2004, then the first prize of £175 went to Mr R Harvey of Rogerstone. There are however some things that never change, you will note that Kath is still sporting the same "all weather gear."

**More members will create a larger cash prize pool, giving bigger and more numerous cash prizes. So play your part and join today for only £5 per entry per month! 50% of the income will be returned in prizes, the other 50% will support the aims of the Friends of Newport Rugby Trust.**



**Become part of the excitement,**  
**Hit the Bullion Trail!**



# Black & Amber Bullion



## FONR Bullion Draw Application Form

Title: (Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms)	
Christian Name/s:	
Surname:	
Address:	
Postcode:	
Date of Birth:	
Telephone Number/s:	
Email address:	

I wish to enter the BLACK AND AMBER BULLION Jackpot Draw. I am aged 18 years or over and agree to abide by the full terms and conditions of the Draw, a copy of which is available at [www.bulliondraw.co.uk](http://www.bulliondraw.co.uk), or from FONR Committee members.

Data Protection Disclosure: On occasions we may contact entrants with information regarding products + services provided by Friends of Newport Rugby Trust. Please tick this box if you do not wish to receive this information.

Signature:	Date:
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## STANDING ORDER MANDATE

To the Manager (name and full postal address of your bank);

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Please accept this instruction to credit Friends of Newport Rugby Trust; Sort Code: 08-92-99,  
Bank Account No. 65144341 at the Cooperative Bank, quoting reference number: \_\_\_\_\_ (office)

The sum of: _____	(in multiples of £5) MONTHLY
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Your Account Name;	
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Your Bank Sort Code:	
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Your Bank Account Number:	
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First Payment Due:	/ /
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Last Payment Due:	/ / or until further notice (tick): ?
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Signature:	Date:
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Please return this form, fully completed to: Friends of Newport Rugby Trust,  
c/o Newport Rugby Football Club., Rodney Road, Newport, NP19 0UU



## The Captain Speaks

27 year old Newport skipper **Dai Pattison**

spoke with Black & Amber Alliance recently. Here is just an outline of the conversation that took place.

Dai is a married man, second anniversary due up in June of this year, born and bred in Cardiff, (*we all have our crosses to bear,*) which is where he still lives. Outside of Rugby his interests are, perhaps typically, of a sporting nature. He is a keen golfer but when asked his handicap it produced a grimace, apparently his style of play can more aptly be described as “being a hacker” (*no surprises there then!*) When not on the golf course, the gym and weight training are the other main attractions.

On the Rugby side of things Dai started out with Cardiff Youth before joining Bristol RFC academy. Eventually wanting to get back into the Welsh playing set in January 2001 he joined Newport RFC, later making his debut for the first XV against Newcastle. That was one of the highlights of his career, recalling that the then coach Ian MacIntosh had “put the fear of God into him, Mac was one heck of a personality.” The other highlight was the Rodney Parade victory over Neath that sealed the Premier League Championship. In his time with Newport he has made over 100 appearances scoring 10 tries. Dai looked slightly “sheepish” when asked about the Youth Cup Final when he played for Cardiff against Newport. His high flying Cardiff side had been impressive in beating both Llanelli and Ponypridd on the way to the final. They believed that the cup was theirs for the taking, I am pleased to say that Newport Youth thought otherwise and the cup found its way back to Rodney Parade!

When asked about the disappointments he immediately pounced upon this years results. “We have under performed big time,” was his forthright

view. “Due to circumstances we have not been able to spend enough time on the paddock, which may have attributed to a loss of form. Confidence has dropped and we need a run of games to regain that confidence and build momentum. We had the win against Llanelli then a couple of games cancelled, now with the 6 nations its still stop start. Whilst the forwards have done ok and secured the ball, we need to go that extra mile. We have been practising the skills and are aiming to integrate as a team.” (*This interview took place prior to the win at Maesteg.*)

When asked about his responsibilities as captain Dai said that, apart from the obvious on field responsibilities, there were few additional off the field duties. He does attend additional “senior player” meetings and become more involved in training. There are a few times when he is called upon to make presentations or “socialise” on behalf of the club. The captain is not involved in the team selection process, occasionally his opinion is sought, but by and large he learns of the team selected along with the rest of the players at Thursday’s training session. Those not being selected are either phoned prior to training, otherwise they are taken to one side and had “a quiet individual word with” as training commences.



Training normally takes place twice a week, Monday night’s session including gym work and video analysis of the previous game. Thursday’s session starts with a warm up, and then the Backs and Forwards split. The forwards practise scrums and lineout’s, (*the backs do their hair,*) before they regroup and go through some team runs.

Dai stressed that “the players who have been here (*at Newport RFC*) along time love it.” And that how those senior players are absolutely determined to turn things around for the supporters and the club. He stressed how much the players appreciated the support of the crowd, and how much they valued the work carried out by supporter organisations. He particularly wanted to thank FoNR for the financial input they have made to the club and for the services that have been supplied to the players.



# Captains Hall of Shame

Welcome to Newport RFC captain Dai Pattison's Hall inaugural "Hall of Shame." Black & Amber Alliance has asked on your behalf the questions that really count. I am sure that the "winners" of these prestigious titles will be forever indebted to their Captain!



## Noisiest Player

"When he trains Dai's front row partner wins this award hands down!"



## First to the Grub

Joint winners of this award are Andy Brown, Matt Veater & Gethin Robinson. "They're first because it's free!"



## Last to the Shower

So much for the front row union!

Dai names Andy, Gethin & Ike as the "dirtiest players in the team."



## First to the Bar

Centre and Vice Captain Scott Williams. Not sure if you can see a pattern emerging here?

## Last from the Bar



## Mirror Hogging

"Hilly is so embarrassing, it's just not happening!"

Runners up were Ceri Young & Lewis Evans.



## Scrooge Award

Newport's Record breaking points scorer doesn't like to "splash the cash, despite having more than most!"





## Congratulations to Daniel Griffiths

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2008 saw Newport RFC outside half Daniel Griffiths become the highest points scorer in the history of the club. His second conversion in that match took him past the previous record of 1,145 points held by Newport Gwent Dragons coach Paul Turner.

The 29-year-old fly-half expressed his relief at finally passing a total that has loomed large for a while. It has seemed like a long time coming and I'm glad to finally have the monkey off my back," he said. "It was pretty special walking through that tunnel at the end. It was



never something that I thought about until it got closer and closer, but then you realise the history of the club and all of those great players that have gone before me. It's a privilege to be mentioned in the same breath as them.

"There was a bit of banter in the changing-room before the game and Alex Walker said no pressure' when I was lining up the kick to do it. But I was just focusing on getting the win because we have had a tough time of it lately and to be honest I was happier when I went over for the try that sealed it."



When Griffiths got back to the changing-rooms he was presented with a bottle of champagne by Newport chairman Will Godfrey who said "He deserves it because he has been so consistent

through the seasons and has proved to be a real asset to the club."

And the bad news for any player who has ambitions to take Griffiths' record off him is that he intends to pile up even more points. Since moving from Whitland in 2003 the Carmarthen-born player has settled nicely at Rodney Parade and has no intention of letting anyone else claim his number 10 shirt. He said: "I love playing at Newport and the support we get is fantastic. I still feel that we are a much better side than our league position would suggest."



*Quotes in this article attributed to Dan Griffiths & Will Godfrey are taken from a South Wales Argus report.*