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Black & Amber Alliance

Issue 8

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Friends of Newport Rugby are pleased to confirm that once again substantial assistance has been given to Rugby at Rodney Parade and also Rugby in the Community.

Following on from the announcement that we had arranged for and funded the **refurbishment of the Goal Posts** at Rodney Parade, we are now delighted to announce further significant investment in Newport RFC. Once again we have funded the supply of **“Energy Food & Drinks”** for the players, we are also pleased to be able to continue to assist with the provision of a **fully qualified masseur**. We have also supplied new radios to assist the coaching staff in communicating during a game.

Since early days, the **FoNR Community section** has sought to provide a stronger link between Newport RFC and the Community it serves. One of the entities that have supported us with this from the beginning has been Bettws RFC. As a club from within the curtilage of the City of Newport, the Trust has been keen to show support to a club that are keen on developing talent and tapping into the energy of local kids. Junior rugby is so beneficial in that it expends excess energy, teaches a team spirit and leadership skills, encourages a fitness regime and creates a community effort involving family, friends around the club set up. Unfortunately, it costs money to put a team on the park. The commitment levels of parents, coaches, teachers and the like should not be underestimated.

A few short years ago, a small volunteer coaching team from Bettws RFC decided to approach the local primary and secondary schools to help coach youngsters in the school environment as well as with the club. Today's under fifteen set up is the result of that along with several

younger age groups following on behind. The Trust Committee have always kept an eye on developments and have invited Bettws down on match days at Rodney Parade to hopefully inspire the children and indicate to them that they are part of the big rugby family that exists around Newport.

Bettws have looked after themselves well and have asked for nothing. They have kitted out their teams and presented them on the park through their own major efforts. As such it was a pleasure this season to be able to offer some sponsorship to Bettws U15 and the Trust agreed to award £500 for playing jersey kit. Trust Members can be assured that as a contributor, your investment is rewarded with a large endorsement emblazoned across the front of the U15 jersey. The award is recognition from Newport Supporters that we globally appreciate the efforts of clubs like Bettws in their efforts to facilitate rugby for children. We recognise the fact that when a player comes through to wear the black and amber, he hasn't appeared there by magic. Hopefully the cash will ease the burden carried by parents, coaches and volunteers who selflessly give their time and money to the rugby cause.

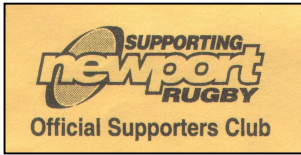
Well done Bettws. Have a great season!



Adam Frampton with the Bettws u15 Squad at the recent Newport Cardiff match

These things have all come at considerable cost from funds that have been raised from a variety of sources.

We would like to thank you all for your support.



Newport Rugby Official Supporters Club
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Membership: We are pleased to confirm that membership costs for the 2008/09 season have once again been held at just £3.50 for adults and £2.00 for juniors and seniors and of course that includes our 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. Your contribution is vital to us and will help us do even more in support of Newport RFC projects in the future.

Player Of The Month Awards: Newport Rugby Official Supporters Club is pleased to be able to confirm continued sponsorship of the Newport RFC Player Of The Month awards. Any supporter is able to vote for the player that has impressed them the most in the last month. The presentation will then be arranged for the winning player to receive their trophy after the first available home match after the end of each month. Votes can be cast by completing a voting form at the Supporters' Club table in the Rodney Hall at any home game.



Player Sponsorship: The Supporters' Club are pleased to confirm continued sponsorship of three Newport RFC players for the 2008/09 season. For the third year, we will sponsor Mike Poole, as well as Alex Murphy and Tom Riley. After the departure of Matthew Veater and James Dixon over the summer, we are delighted to select two new players for sponsorship this year. The Supporters' Club committee view this sponsorship as an excellent method of using Supporters' Club funds to make a direct contribution to and financially support the running of Newport RFC.



Away Travel: The Supporters' Club will continue to offer coach travel to all Newport RFC away fixtures. However, we cannot continue to subsidise this service to the extent we did in the last season (over £700). Consequently we will of course arrange and advertise coaches to all away games but if the booking numbers are not economically viable, then we will not run the coach. To ensure that we can continue running the coaches, we would encourage supporters to book early. Travel on the coaches is for members only but non-members can always book their place and then join 'on the day'. Bookings can be made at the Supporters' Club table at any home game or by contacting the Newport Ticket Office in person or by telephoning Newport 670690.

Forthcoming Coaches:

Saturday, 11th Oct 2008
 Neath RFC v Newport RFC

Saturday, 25th Oct 2008
 Glam Wand RFC v Newport RFC

Places on the coaches can be booked at any home game or by contacting the Newport Ticket Office on 01633 670690 at any time.

Prize Draw Winners:

Cardiff – 13th Sept 2008

Adult: Alex Hobbs
 Junior: Jordan Evans

Llandovery – 20th Sept 2008

Adult: Ben Owens
 Junior: Joe Bishop

Members Free Prize Draw: We are pleased to confirm that we will continue the Members Free Prize Draw for all Newport RFC home league matches for the 2008/09 season. All members will be automatically entered into a free prize draw for each game – Adult winners get a £25 club shop voucher and junior members receive £10.

Winners for each game will be advertised on our website, in the match day programme, as well as being announced at the relevant home match.

Match Day Mascots: In conjunction with FONR, the Supporters Club jointly operates the match day mascot scheme for junior members to get a chance to meet the players before a game and run out onto the pitch with them. They also get a commemorative polo shirt embroidered with details of the match and a photo taken with their favourite player.

If you know someone who would enjoy this special match day experience, please make contact at either the Supporters' Club or FONR tables in the clubhouse on any match day.



Social Events: We hope to shortly announce details of the ever popular New Years Eve Party to see in the New Year in the Rodney Parade clubhouse on, not surprisingly, Wednesday, 31st December 2008.

There will be live entertainment to see out the final moments of 2008 and a disco to keep the party going into the early hours of 2009. To add to the party atmosphere, the tables will be decorated and include balloons, streamers and party novelties to make the evening go with a bang.

Keep an eye out at our match day table, website and programme notes for further details of arrangements and ticketing details.

PLEASE HELP US TO SUPPORT OUR CLUB: Membership renewal forms were sent out to all members at the end of last season and are of course available at the Supporters' Club table in the Rodney Hall at all home games. If you have not yet renewed your membership for the 2008/09 season, we would be very pleased to receive your application form at the earliest opportunity. Many thanks for your continued support!

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, please visit our match day table in the Rodney Hall or contact any committee member for more information or to discuss how you may be able to help.

The Captain Speaks

Black and Amber Alliance met up with the new Newport RFC Captain

Andrew Coombs recently. We would like to thank him for giving up his time and speaking with us.

“Coombsie” is 23 years of age, he has one young step-daughter with another child on the way, he still lives in Nelson and works as a salesman for a computer software company.



Andy played for Newport Youth in his early days but he wasn't directly offered a contract with Newport RFC, instead being asked to spend a season with Newport Saracens to further develop. He was also offered a contract by Blackwood which he decided to take instead, after just one pre season game Pontypool came in with an offer to join them which he duly accepted. Andy gives great credit to the two coaches he played for at Pontypool Park, Steve “Junnah” Jones and Dai Gray, for the part they played in his development. Certainly something must have gone well as soon after he was offered a development contract with the Newport Gwent Dragons, unfortunately for him this did not work out well as he suffered a very bad shoulder injury whilst playing at Llanelli. In the process of Andy grounding a try an opponent managed land on him dislocating both shoulders. This turned out to be a long term injury that needed surgery to correct, equally it put paid to his regional contract, which was not renewed when it expired. Their loss has been Newport RFC's gain as Andrew signed for Newport, was voted “Player of the Year” and has now become Club Captain this season, both of these accolades are ones of which he is immensely proud.

Andy's previous experiences as captain have been limited to mini rugby, but he does have a wealth of experience around him and says, “I'm glad Dai Pats is in the side, he's got bags of experience, I'm learning all the time. There are also plenty of other leaders in the side, Dan & Scott are there to lead the backs, and they all help with the video analysis. Captaincy is easy while we're winning, it's if we lose the test will come.”

When asked about the differences between this season and last Andy were quick to praise the professionalism of the coaching staff. Sven

brings “seriousness and a real hard game plan”, Jon “skills and patterns of play”, Dai “offloading & enthusiasm, he's always bouncing around like a lunatic.”

James Knight, the fitness coach for both Newport RFC & Newport Gwent Dragons has brought “a totally new training regime that is fun as well as punishing. Training is now more geared to games, we're dragging weights, flipping tyres rather than just lifting weights. Pre season he had us all running sand dunes and wading through the sea at 8.30 one morning, these things have brought us closer together.” Mike Sage was “perfect as team manager, he's good at his job and gets the organisation just right.”

“This season the squad has really bonded, with real friendships, whereas last year there were more individuals. Overall we now have the right people in the right roles doing what they need to. Last season we underachieved, this year we aim to finish top, we must turn Rodney Parade back into a fortress, we must look after our own turf.”

“It's about attitude and professionalism, if we get our heads on for 1½ hours during training and games we will get silverware to show for it.”



Asked about his best memories in his rugby career so far our captain came up with four, the first pains me to report, was scoring the winning try for Wales U18's against England, coming on as a replacement for a certain Richard Dale. The second winning the Youth Cup Final for Newport Youth, The cream of the bunch was playing in Rod Snows testimonial game alongside world class players such as Gary Teichman, Shane Howarth and Rod himself. Possibly best to forget the fourth, apparently he played for a

village pub team that sneaked a victory against the mighty Black & Ambers. Guess if he leads us to the title we will forgive him, if not he's on dodgy ground!

Black & Amber Alliance would like to thank Andy for this insight into him as a captain and as a player. We were mightily impressed with his attitude and professionalism and are proud to have him as skipper of our famous club.

Captains Hall of Shame

This seasons Captain, Andy Coombs chooses his own “Hall of Shame.” Once again Black & Amber Alliance has asked the questions that really count. I am sure that the “winners” of these prestigious titles will be forever indebted to their Captain! For comparison purposes lasts seasons “winners”, courtesy of Dai Pattison are also shown.

Noisest Player (Prev Gethin Robinson)



Joint winners this year are Mike Leaman and Craig Hill, “they’re always taking the mickey (not quite the word used!) and never shut up!”



First to the Grub (Prev Andy Brown, Gethin Robinson & Matt Veater)



This years “who ate all the pies award” winner is Scott Williams, Andy did however state that a certain backs coach ran him close! Guess that will cost him his place in the side!



First to the Bar (Prev Scott Williams)

Scott retains his crown!
“no doubt about this award it’s definitely Scotty!”

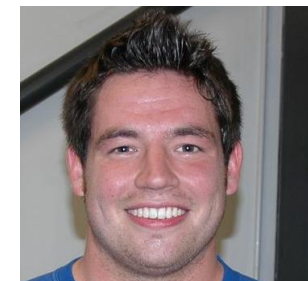


Last from the Bar (Prev Scott Williams)

Surprise winner this year, Nathan Williams.
“I would have said Scotty but he can’t hold his drink and usually falls over. Nathan’s always there posing!”

Last to the Shower (Prev Ian Evans, Andy Brown, & Gethin Robinson)

This years winner, new prop Alex Murphy, “he’s always outside talking!”



Mirror Hogging (Prev Craig Hill)

Alex Murphy picks up another award, this time for



vanity. “Smurf thinks he looks like Kelly Jones from the Stereophonics, he’s deluded!”

Editors Note, whilst not actually nominating himself in this category our Captain did let slip that he was

always last from the shower. Could this be a case of the pot calling the kettle Black (and Amber) ?



Scrooge Award (Prev Dan Griffiths)

This season the man nominated as the “man least likely to buy a round.” Is Hooker Andrew Brown
“I would have said Veater (anyone remember him?) but I will have to say Brownie!”



The Season So Far

Uskmouth Men of Gwent 7's

Craig Hill captained a Newport RFC squad that swept all and sundry from their path. Perhaps the most satisfying was the victory over last years winners the Newport Gwent Dragons Academy side, coached by Paul Turner!



Newport RFC with the trophy & the cheque!

Newport RFC 18 v Cinderford RFC 0

A very tough competitive match went Newport's way with tries from Paul Jones & Richard Dale, Daniel Griffiths scoring 2 penalties & 1 conversion

Richard Dale on the Charge



Cinderford RFC 13 v Newport RFC 24

Cinderford stepped in at the last minute offering a return fixture after Lydney couldn't raise a side. Steve Taylor scoring a try and Nathan Williams bagged a pair. Dan Griffiths converted all 3 and added a penalty.

This time Nathan gets stopped

Newport RFC 12 v Bristol Rugby 56

A game of 2 halves the first half against the full premiership team was lost 42-0, but the second half against a complete new team was a far closer affair with Bristol edging it 14-12. Newport's points came from tries from Andy Coombs & Dan McShane, With Dan Griffiths adding a conversion.



Try scorer Dan McShane

Newport RFC 30 v Cardiff RFC 3

What a performance! 2 tries from Mike Poole, and 1 each from Jason Tovey & Andy Brown gave Newport a bonus point win over our big spending rivals from the capital!



"Why did we waste so much money?"

Newport RFC 67 v Llandovery RFC 5

Another bonus point, this time tries came from Craig Hill(2), Mike Poole, Andrew Quick, Ian Evans, Jason Tovey, Mike Burke, Dai Pattison, Nathan Williams, and Tom Issacs.

Craig makes yet another break



Bridgend RFC 17 v Newport RFC 18

This was much more of a battle, with fights breaking out regularly. Between the fisticuffs Mike Poole & Jason Tovey scored tries, Jason converting one and adding a penalty. Dan Griffiths also scored a penalty. Definitely wasn't a pretty match but a will still go down as a win!



OK, so it's the wrong match but Mike's still heading for the tryline!

Stop Press

Ebbw Vale RFC 3 v Newport RFC 9

How You can Help

There are a range of ways that you can help us to help Rugby in Newport. FoNR supports rugby in the community as well as here at Rodney Parade. We would be delighted to receive your support in any of the following ways.



Utility Prices Getting You Down?

In this day and age bills just seem to keep going up and up, hardly a day goes by without a price increase being announced. FoNR can help, we have a partnership with Utility Warehouse, a company who are committed to providing Gas, Electricity, Phone calls & Internet services and the lowest possible prices. Please contact Andrew Hopkins at andrew@fonr.co.uk, alternatively

have a chat at our stall on matchdays. We are sure you will be able to save money and you will be helping us to help Rugby in Newport.

Become a member

For less than £1 per month you can be a full member of FoNR, we also have concessionary rates that make things even better value. By joining not only do you help to provide money to further our community projects and those supporting the teams and supporters at Rodney Parade, but you also get a say in how things are done. Please drop by the table or contact john.evans@newportrugbytrust.co.uk for full details.

Sponsorship Opportunities

There are a very limited amount of chances left to sponsor a player, however there are still chances to sponsor matches and match balls. Each of these packages comes with a different range of benefits, why not ask FoNR today to find out which best suits your circumstances?



New Merchandise Available Now



“Flames” cap £9



Beanie Hats £5



Badges £1 each



Lambswool Jumpers £35



Hoodies £22.50



Pencil Set £1.00



Mugs £4



Contrast Polo £15



Standard Polo £13.50

Other goods & colours available, visit the FoNR table, these items are not available in the club shop!