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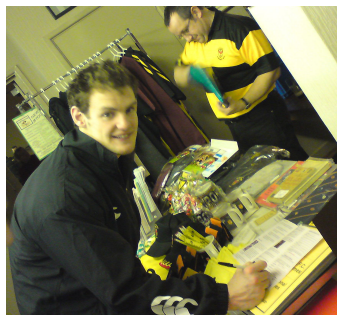
Black & Amber Alliance

Issue 10

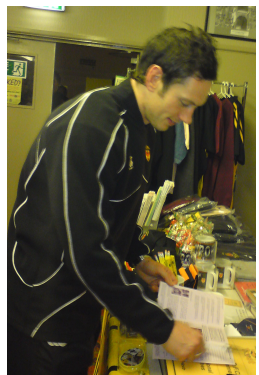
Editor: tingevdavec@aol.com

Membership Boost

FoNR are delighted to announce that we have received membership applications from nearly every member of the Newport RFC playing, coaching and backroom staff. The very few that have so far been unable to complete their applications have pledged to join. This



provides not only a major boost to our income, but it demonstrates the esteem that the players and officials hold for the trust and the work that it does in support of Rugby at Rodney Parade as well as Rugby in the community.



This publication has publicised many of the undertakings that the trust has been involved with. **A major new contribution to Newport Rugby is dealt with in this issue.**

We are delighted to welcome all of them as fully paid up members of the trust.

Our Players are members are you?

(Download membership forms www.fonr.co.uk or from our table.)



FoNR announce major new funding

You may recall that in the last issue of Black & Amber Alliance we conducted an interview with Newport RFC Captain Andy Coombs. After that interview Andy was asked whether there were any needs that the players had that would improve the status of Newport RFC. FoNR is constantly in dialogue with the club regarding possible projects to support, this however was the first time that the playing staff had been approached directly.

The club has a state of the art computer system that allows for a game to be dissected into its various component parts, this system is so important to the coaches that it is in constant use by them, consequently the senior players get little access to the system.

FoNR researched the system and its benefits before agreeing to fund a second system for the players use.

Backs coach Jon Bryant explained to us how it worked, “we can follow



each phase of the game, if we want to watch rucks it will just jump from ruck to ruck. If I want to follow one particular player let's say Scott Williams, it will follow every single move he makes during a match.”

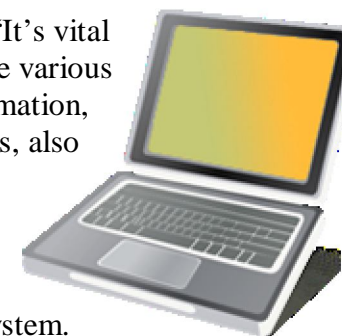
Forwards coach Dai Gray and Team Manager Mike Sage were both equally as positive.

Andy Coombs said “It's vital that the leaders of the various

areas on the park have access to this type of information, it will give Scott & Dan real insight with the backs, also the likes of Dai Pats & I with the forwards.”

The system being state of the art doesn't come cheap, it needs a state of the art laptop to run it, however FoNR felt confident enough to back our players with the necessary £1799 to pay for the system.

On being told that FoNR had agreed the purchase Andy Coombs said “You are true legends for doing this. This is great news for the club and can only be another step in the right direction”



The Trust was pleased to be able to invite St. Julians HSOB to Rodney Parade on 1st November for the crucial top of the table clash with Llanelli.

St. Julians HSOB have been in existence for a long time at senior level, but in October of 2007, the club secretary, Andy Lee, decided that it was about time that a mini section was set up to essentially serve the school catchment areas of St. Julians and Glan Usk Primary Schools. Glan Usk is the replacement school for the old Durham Road School.

Within two months there were two age group sides playing at there home ground at the Glebelands, at Under Eight and Under Nine.

This season there are well over thirty children training and playing regularly for the two teams as well as five qualified coaches looking after them.



They turned out at the Parade all smartly kitted out and formed the Guard of Honour for both Llanelli and Newport as they ran out onto the park. Unfortunately Newport were brought up just short by an outstanding Llanelli side and lost out by four points.



As is the norm with the junior and mini teams we come across around the city and surrounding area, they are largely self funding by the efforts, enthusiasm and expense of parents and club officials.

We can only applaud the efforts of these dedicated people who ensure that future generations of players are preparing to play at senior level in the future.

St. Julians also provided a mascot from both age groups to help captain Andy Coombs to lead out the Newport team. They were Conor Williams and James Haslett. In the week that Newport celebrated the anniversary of beating the 1963 All Blacks, it was a pleasant coincidence to learn that young James' grandfather was the late great Glyn Davidge who put his body on the line that day in '63.

Mascots

Newport bounced back from a disappointing defeat to table toppers Llanelli to demolish Pontypridd on a cold Friday night. Young Alfie Humphreys representing the Trust and the Supporters Club as mascot helped captain Andrew Coombs lead out the team before kick off.



Beforehand, he met his favourite player Alex Murphy and the pair of them were photographed together.



The mascot for the match at Rodney Parade against the Wizards of Aberavon was thirteen year old Shane Robertson. Shane led the team out with captain Andy Coombs and met Rodney Parade favourite, Scot Williams.



Newport Rugby Official Supporters Club

Contact Details:

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Post: c/o Newport RFC, Rodney Road, Newport NP19 0UU



Membership: We have recently written to all members from last season that have not yet renewed their membership for the current season. We welcome members old and new to join us and help us to further the support for Newport RFC. Last season, we invested almost £1,000 in financially supporting Newport RFC through player sponsorship. In addition, around £500 was returned to members in the form of such benefits as the free Members Prize Draw. We provided subsidised coach travel to all Newport RFC away matches. A number of social events were arranged, including an evening that raised over £2,500 for Newport bases charity, St Anne's Hospice.

Membership costs for the 2008/09 season have been held at £3.50 for adults and £2.00 for juniors and seniors, this includes our free 'only with membership' lapel badge! Application Forms can be downloaded from our website or collected from 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.

Away Travel: The Supporters' Club continues 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 on the coach and then join 'on the day'.

Bookings can be made at the Supporters' Club table in the Rodney Hall at any home game or by contacting the Newport Ticket Office in person or by telephoning Newport 670690 at any time.

Forthcoming Coaches:

Saturday, 27th Dec 2008

Cross Keys RFC v Newport RFC

Saturday, 10th Jan 2009

Llandovery RFC v Newport RFC

Tuesday, 10th Feb 2009

Pontypool RFC v Newport RFC

Saturday, 7th Mar 2009

Swansea RFC v Newport RFC

We will also announce coaches to any SWALEC Cup away fixtures as and when confirmed

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:

Swansea – 18th Oct 2008

Adult: Howard Hoare

Junior: William J Watkins

Llanelli – 1st Nov 2008

Adult: Nancy Vale

Junior: Stacey Spencer

Pontypridd – 7th Nov 2008

Adult: Ross Harris

Junior: Samantha Schanzer

Aberavon – 15th Nov 2008

Adult: Lee Hennessey

Junior: Gethin Griffiths-Richard

Members Free Prize Draw: The Members Free Prize Draw for all Newport RFC home league matches continues for the 2008/09 season. All members are 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. The latest winners for recent matches are shown in the table. Congratulations to all!

Match Day Mascots: There are still opportunities for junior members to be a mascot at a Newport RFC home game this season. 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.

Blackheath Match: The Supporters' Club were pleased to be able to provide financial support to Newport RFC to help towards the costs of the special 150th anniversary match at Blackheath on 22nd November



Social Events: Details of the popular New Years Eve Party to see in the New Year in the Rodney Parade clubhouse will be confirmed shortly. Tickets can be purchased from the Supporters' Club table in the Rodney Hall on any home match day.

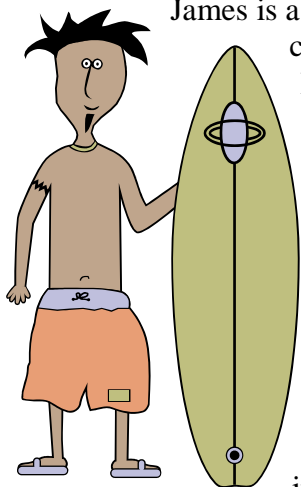
PLEASE HELP US TO SUPPORT OUR CLUB: We would be very pleased to receive your application form for membership at the earliest opportunity. Many thanks for your continued support!

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 can help.

www.newportrugbysupportersclub.com

Meet “The Fitness Guru”

James Knight joined Newport Gwent Dragons last season as Strength and Conditioning Coach, this season his role has been expanded to include the Newport RFC club side. Black & Amber Alliance has taken the opportunity to meet up with James and to ask about his methods. Whilst this article is written from a Newport RFC perspective, James takes the same approach to the regional side as well.



James is a 27 year old Surfing nut from Tenby West Wales, currently single with no kids and living in Cardiff Bay. When not involved with rugby he spends his time searching out some decent waves, perhaps this is why so much of preseason conditioning work took place on sand!

Six years in the British Army as a Physical Training Instructor meant that James was well versed in techniques that not only maximise an individual's fitness level, but perhaps more importantly those that moulded individuals together into a functioning unit. Whilst in the army the conditioning of the various sports sides, including rugby came under James' responsibility.

He spent some time after the Army in gym management but his main aim was always to become a fitness coach with a major rugby side, when the chance arose to join Newport Gwent Dragons he jumped at it. Many of James' methods with the sides playing out of Rodney Parade have been based on his army experience. Equally many of his methods were different to that which had been previously experienced by our players, initially there were some sceptics, but now they have all been won over.

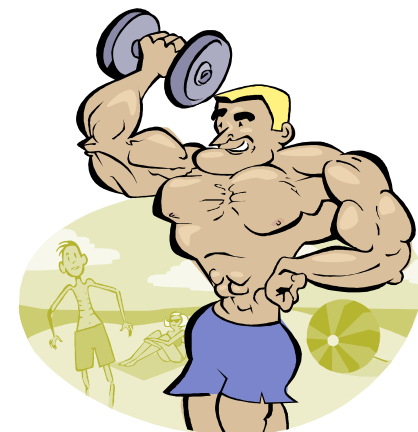
One of the key elements that came over time again was that training had to be player/position specific. Most ex players will recognise the concept that Backs and Forwards have different training requirements, and as such often train separately. James has taken that philosophy the extra logical step, a Prop for example has different duties during a match to a Lock, a Blindside Flanker different to an Openside, and consequently their training needs are slightly different. Each player has a “function specific” training routine, however there are some similarities. Forwards on the whole are required to work on strength and endurance, whilst

backs purely concentrate on speed and agility. Assessment of video analysis shows that backs on average are only actually running for less than 5 minutes per game, but when they do it is in short high speed bursts. Forwards on the other hand are expected to move from ruck to maul over and over again. It is the packs that can do these things repeatedly that will eventually come away with the ball. Army training says that the fitter and better drilled you are, the more able you are to work in a stressful environment. In rugby terms you are still able to make the pass or hit the ruck!

The initial assessment of the Newport players was that they were not big enough, they needed more muscle, each player was given an individual program, position specific (a term that crops up regularly.)

Then there was 3 months of fitness training, running sand dunes, press ups in the sea, and running mountains, again the army mentality. However a key element was working together, in each exercise players were either in pairs or teams, working with each other to succeed against the opposition. James even recreated the “Gun Run” that you may have seen on TV Remembrance Day celebrations, rather than dismantling a field gun and passing it over a wall before reassembly, the rugby version involved weights and medicine balls that all needed lifting at pace and in unison.

It's about keeping each other going, and building the weakest player to the level of the strongest. This attitude has flowed throughout the squad and this season there is a tightness and togetherness that wasn't as evident in previous seasons. In a match situation it was demonstrated by an incident at Bridgend, whilst not wishing to condone violence James took great delight that when one team member was attacked the whole 15 went to his assistance, “not one player stood back!”



Position & function specific is also demonstrated by ongoing training with weight sacks, tyre flips and dragging weights being a feature for the pack, every exercise has a match related element.

Another major element has been the introduction of correct nutrition, hydration and recovery programs. The team have all seen the benefit and have now completely bought into the idea. Apparently it is not unusual for James to receive a phone call from a team member checking out whether or not he really should eat a particular meal.

“The guys are now all focussed, everyone turns up knowing what they have to do, and they have adopted the attitude of putting in the effort and then getting out of here. Gone are the thoughts of why are we doing this, they have seen the benefits and are searching for more.”

James was keen to praise the rest of the coaching set up “I’m learning things from them as we go, I get excellent support from Sven Dai & Jon, they are dynamic and excellent at putting the message across. Together they monitor the loads and stresses on the players whilst maintaining a tight disciplined structure.”

When asked about where the sides would finish at the end of the season,



James was confident. “The regional side will finish mid table and Newport RFC will win the league. There is a belief in the squad that does not allow for second place!”

Black & Amber Alliance would like to thank James for his contribution to both sides playing from Rodney Parade. Also we would like to thank him for generously giving up his time to speak with us at the end of yet another long hard day. Thank you James, the Premier League title would be nice.... Can you throw in the cup as well?



Black & Amber Bullion *Jackpot Draw* *Backing the future of rugby in Newport*

November Bullion Draw

Injured Newport back row forward Richard Dale made the November draw which delighted regular supporter Jon Sheppard when his name came out of the hat first! 1st (£300) - Jon Sheppard 2nd (£75) - Sara Ball 3rd (£25) - Godfrey Lee



October Bullion Draw



The October draw was held at the Newport RFC v Swansea RFC match, Newport RFC Chairman Will Godfrey pulled out the latest winners from the hat. The 1st prize of £300 went to Mrs J Thomas, 2nd prize of £75 to Mr Rob Kenny & the 3rd prize of £25 to Mr Mike Dams. Congratulations go to the lucky prize winners, all

receiving a cash prize in time for Christmas

Have You Joined yet?

From just £5 per month download a form today
Or visit our table on match days.

www.bulliondraw.co.uk/documents/

Supporting Rugby at Rodney Parade
Supporting Rugby in the Community



Christmas is Coming!

Christmas is almost upon us, and in credit crunch times we are looking for bargains. The **Shopping Portal** is an easy way to help raise money for FoNR, all the proceeds are used to support rugby in the community or rugby at Rodney Parade.

The great thing about the **Shopping Portal** is that you can access loads of bargains from loads of companies while still enjoying the same low internet prices. If you

want to make a purchase from any one of the shops that participate just log on using our access www.buy.at/fonr this will take you straight to the site you want and enable you to buy at the same price as any other internet purchaser. The only difference is that the shop you are buying from will give FoNR a small percentage of the price you pay as a commission.



It's easy yet it helps Rugby in Newport

Over 100 Outlets

A reward for FoNR every time you purchase

Beat the queues

Shop in comfort

No traffic or parking

Gifts direct to your door, often free delivery

Compare products using product search



Price Promise

You pay exactly the same price as on the retailer's main sites, often lower than on the high street.

The commission earned by FoNR comes out of the retailer's profit margin - it is their marketing spend.

These pages are just to give an idea of the goods and shops available. Use the **Shopping Portal** you get



Great Choices

Great Prices

Fast delivery



Shop from the comfort of your own home



www.buy.at/fonr

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Black & Amber goods still available from our stall



We have a wide range of stock available, loads of sizes, different colours available to order. Why not visit the stall at our next home match and check out the great new range. From Beanie Hats at just £5, Mugs at £4. We also have a range of Christmas Novelty Gifts, we've Shirts, Jumpers, Hoodies and much much more.



All profits support Rugby in the Community & Rugby at Rodney Parade