



# Black & Amber Alliance

Issue 15

## FoNR help improve facilities

Friends of Newport Rugby Trust are pleased to have helped the club with improvements to the ladies' toilets in the clubhouse. Some of this work was well overdue, as we were regularly reminded by our lady members.

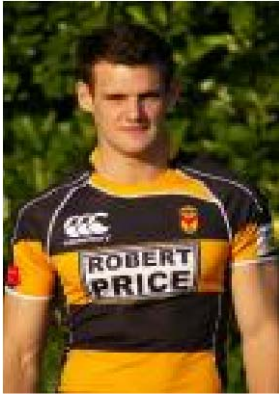
The Trust works to help the team and also provide facilities for the supporters and visitors to the club and was pleased to help with the costs of these improvements. This latest initiative follows help with the gents toilets and with upgrading floodlights in the past, and other more direct help for the team, including heating for the gym.

## Green Christmas

Last year the Trust made a small contribution to green issues by providing a vehicle for supporters to send greetings via the match programme, instead of printed cards. We expect to repeat the idea next year



We were also pleased to put local band Innovence in contact with the club, and they provided after match entertainment at the Gael Force game. They'll be back for the Dragons v Munster game on 6 March. Come along and hear them play.



## Try Scorer Extraordinaire

Black & Amber Alliance met Newport wing and last seasons top try scorer Mike Poole.

Mike is 23 years old. Born in Cardiff, he now lives in Penarth and has a girlfriend Sorelle of 6 years.

He attended Stanwell Comprehensive in Penarth and after that went on to gain a BSc honour s degree in en vironmental Geo Sci ence while studying at Cardiff. Obviously there's far more to Mike than the totally committed "body on the line" rugby player that we see on a Saturday afternoon!

In response to a grovelling apology from your reporter Mike said "Underestimated - that's how I like to be." Well, we certainly don't underestimate Mike's value to the team!

Outside of rugby his interests are pretty diverse, from surfing and carp fishing, both in France as well as here in the U.K., to martial arts.



Mike has a background in Jujitsu, Kick Boxing and Boxing. At the age of 16 he started training in MMA (the British version of the highly popular UFC.)

In fact he was so successful that while at university Mike was considering a fighting contract. Luckily for us he chose rugby as it fitted in better with his university studies. The urge to compete hasn't totally gone and Mike will keep his hand in by training with the fighting during the close season.



Mikes' rugby career started at St Albans RFC as a young lad, apparently having to sneak out to his cousins and Uncle Stephen's in order to play as Mikes' dad was far keener that he played football.

From then on he went to play for Cardiff juniors, Old Penarthians, and on to Newport youth. After taking a year out with the fighting Mike spent the latter part of a season at Pontypool before joining Newport RFC - the rest as they say is history.

"Newport RFC is without doubt the best club I have been at," (good job he didn't say Pontypool!)

Not only do we have "Uncle Steve" to thank for Mikes' introduction to rugby, but he has also been a major inspiration to Mike throughout his life. Steve is a family man, and was an electrician who decided that he wanted more from life and took a University degree and masters in engineering, before becoming a top Health & Safety Executive. Mike describes him as "an unbelievable man,"

I guess this is how Mike gets his desire to be "the best he can be, to fulfil his potential," and "I do what I do! Others will determine how far I go but I will give my all. My body may end up regretting this but I believe you should play hard or not play at all!"

Asked about highs and lows of his rugby career Mike said "The lows have to be the spells of injury, as a youth player I ruptured my anterior cruciate ligament. This season has been stop start due to injuries. I was on a real high going into the season on the back of last year. Preseason I was absolutely flying and my expectations were really high. It does get frustrating.

The high points are harder to say, unfortunately I haven't won anything yet. It was however a real buzz to be involved with the side that won the

“Men of Gwent 7’s.” We went into the competition as underdogs with the professional 7’s touring team expected to win.” Mike also came up with an unusual highlight: while most players may not be so keen he looks forward to preseason, “I enjoy the fact that there are often many new faces, it’s interesting trying to figure out the various personalities.” He didn’t mention being forced to run relentlessly up and down the sand dunes of Merthyr Mawr!

Mike has been working as a sustainability and environmental consultant for some time. However being an “outdoor person” that enjoys shooting and fishing he was feeling constrained by the amount of time sitting at a desk.



It was while sitting on a river bank watching a float while having a “cuppa” and a chat with fellow angler Sam Waldron that an idea was born. Both were looking for a change of direction in their working lives and after much research the idea developed into a full blown plan, cul-

minating recently in the launch of **Discreet Pest Solutions**.

**DPS** will specialise in the control of different varieties of pests from the obvious - rats, mice and other such rodents, to the less obvious – insect infestations, flies, bugs, cockroaches and other creepy crawlies. They will even deal with the more obscure types of pests like birds. My initial thought was how can a bird be a pest, they’re pretty things that you feed in the garden? However when trapped in a loft or a chimney their lovable status could well change!

It would be inappropriate for FoNR to recommend or advertise **DPS**, however we do wish the boys the best of luck with this new venture. **DPS** will welcome the opportunity to assist with any situations whether domestic or commercial, any enquiries should be made to either the Cardiff office on **07817963079** or the Newport office on **0781675573**.

## Discreet Pest Solutions.- The Newport RFC Pests

When asked to nominate a couple of “Pests” that might be outside the remit of even **DPS** Mike nominated these.

**Beer** – it’s difficult to get to the bar as “magic” Scotty is always there



**Gym** – Browner is always hogging the weights “he’s a beast”



**Revelry** – Team manager Mike Sage has a bit of a reputation here, hard to imagine as he looks so smart.



**Major pest** – Physiotherapist Jeremy is the banter pest! “Serious action needed”

**Clever pest** – “peter pan” Danny G always gives good advice “he’d be hard to catch”





## Newport Rugby Official Supporters Club



Contact Details:

Website: [www.newportrugbysupportersclub.com](http://www.newportrugbysupportersclub.com)

Email [admin@newportrugbysupportersclub.com](mailto:admin@newportrugbysupportersclub.com)

Post c/o Newport RFC, Rodney Road, Newport

**Player of the Month:** Presentations were made recently to a number of winners of the Player of the Month awards.

Junior Black and Amber supporter, Jessie Bishop, age 11, helped us out with the presentations to the winners.

The winner for **October 2009** was popular hooker, **Andrew Brown** (right).



Player of the Month  
**November 2009**  
Andrew Coombs



Player of the Month  
**December 2009**  
Dai Pattison



Player of the Month  
**January 2010**  
Mike Poole



**Newport RFC End of Season Function:** We are pleased to confirm that the Newport RFC End of Season function will be held in the Clubhouse on

**Saturday, 1<sup>st</sup> May 2010.** There will be a live band, disco and buffet and of course we will be making the annual player presentations with the squad in attendance for the evening. Tickets are on sale NOW at a cost of just £10 and available from any Supporters' Club committee member plus from the Supporters' Club table or the clubhouse bars on all match days. Please make a note in your diary and come along to show the players your valuable support.

[www.newportrugbysupportersclub.com](http://www.newportrugbysupportersclub.com)

**Away Travel:** The Supporters' Club continues to offer coach travel to all Newport RFC away fixtures. 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 for the coaches 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.

The information opposite shows the forthcoming away games that we intend arranging coaches for, subject to sufficient demand (please note further fixtures will be confirmed in due course).

### **Forthcoming Coaches:**

**Sunday, 7<sup>th</sup> Mar 2010**

Cornish Pirates v Newport RFC

**Saturday, 13<sup>th</sup> Mar 2010**

Llandoverly RFC v Newport RFC

**Friday, 19<sup>th</sup> Mar 2010**

Pontypool RFC v Newport RFC

**PLEASE NOTE:** Coaches will run if there is sufficient demand to make them economically viable – **PLEASE BOOK EARLY!** Please check with the Newport Ticket Office after midday on the Wednesday before the match to confirm the coach is running.

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

### **Latest Members Prize Draw Winners:**

**Aberavon – 12<sup>th</sup> Dec 2009**

Adult: Tony Bramwell

Junior: Gethin Griffiths-Richard

**Swansea – 19<sup>th</sup> Dec 2009**

Adult: John Evans

Junior: Owain Hobbs

**Cross Keys – 5<sup>th</sup> Feb 2010**

Adult: Stuart Parry

Junior: Sam Danaher

### **Join the Supporters' Club Today!**

If you are not currently a member of the Supporters' Club, we would encourage you to join up now! Membership costs just £3.5 for adults and £2.00 for juniors and senior (no increase for over seven years). Your contribution will ensure that we can do even more in support of Newport RFC projects in the future.

Membership fees include our free 'only with membership' lapel badge, as well as automatic entry into our Members Free Prize Draw for all Newport RFC home league matches.

**PLEASE HELP US TO SUPPORT OUR CLUB:** We would be very pleased to receive your application form for membership at the earliest opportunity. Completed forms can be returned to us at the Supporters' Club table in the Rodney Hall at any home game or by posting to the club. Many thanks for your continued support and **please join the Supporters' Club TODAY!**

# Save Money and get Free FoNR Membership!

Friends of Newport Rugby have been associated with Utility Warehouse for some time now, and members have enjoyed savings on gas, electricity, home and mobile telephone and broadband. The more services that are taken, the better the overall saving.

For people taking up Utility Warehouse membership now, we are offering free membership of the Trust. Just click on the link on the Talk Newport website, or contact Andrew Hopkins via the Trust stand in the main bar before every home game.



## SAVE MONEY on all your utilities

## Shopping Portal

If you are an online shopper, why not get to your favourite sites via the Trust's shopping portal and help raise funds for the Trust? Just click the link on the Trust sites or go straight to

[Www.buy.at/fonr](http://www.buy.at/fonr)

There is a wide choice of top retailers, including Amazon, John Lewis, Marks & Spencer and Asda, to mention just a few, plus travel sites like Expedia. You'll pay the same as going direct, but the Trust will receive a commission which all goes towards helping the club and rugby in the community.

<b><a href="http://buy.at/">buy.at/</a></b>	<b>Click here to visit our online shop.</b>	
<b>We receive commission for our funds on everything you buy</b>		

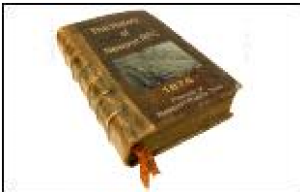


## The Trust's Websites

For more information on the Trust and its work, why not visit one of its websites



This is the main Trust website where you will find news of activities, the shop, information on the Trust and contact details



The History of Newport site is dedicated to recording the history of our great club. We have 126 seasons, 569 players and 4756 games in the database - so far!



Our monthly Black and Amber Bullion is a subscription draw with the chance to win a monthly prize of £300 and even more in superdraws



Talk Newport is a family friendly discussion board where you can chat about all things Black and Amber - and the rest of rugby if you must.

## Community News

On 7<sup>th</sup> November, Newport were hosts to Cardiff RFC for the traditional replay of one of rugby's oldest fixtures. At the match, the Trust organised a Guard of Honour for the players as they ran out on to the pitch with children from the Eveswell Primary School rugby team. Eveswell have been regular visitors to Rodney parade over the last few years and as one of the nearest primary schools to the ground it is good to see that a closer relationship is being formed.

The team is coached by Sue Williams, an avid Newport Supporter, who is also involved with the Newport High School Old Boys Junior set up. We were also pleased to hear that our own Richard Dale had been helping with training at Eveswell.

The boys gave some vocal support and no doubt helped Newport to secure another win over the old enemy. Cardiff have still not recorded a league victory at Rodney Parade in the semi-pro era (And it's the league that matters, isn't it?)



At the time of the visit, we were still looking for a few more match day mascots to fill the fixture list. Thinking it would be a good idea to invite one or two Eveswell lads to perform the task, we ended up with such a good response that most mascots will appear in pairs for the remainder of the season. Also, Richard Dale must have made an impression and is now well on the way to being the mascots' Player of the Season.



For some news on our sponsored team, St Julian's High School Old Boys U10, you can see their website here:

<http://www.stjuliansrfc.co.uk/>



It appears 'The Saints' are doing quite well this season. Well done to them and we wish them all the best for the rest of the season. Go and look at the website and give them any support you can.

## Trust News

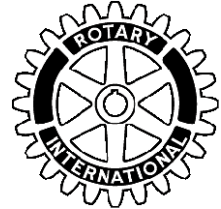
### AGM

The FoNR AGM is scheduled to be held at Rodney Parade on Thursday 8 April. All members are welcome and formal notices will be sent out soon.

There are vacancies on the committee and if you can help out please put yourself forward.

### Fundraising

For the second year running, the Trust are taking part in the Uskmouth Newport Rotary Club Prize Draw. We sell the tickets, the prizes are donated by various bodies to the rotary club and we keep all the cash. It's a win-win situation.



All we need to do is sell the tickets. We started at the Cardiff cup game and a few volunteers have stepped forward to help. We could of course, do with a few more. If you want to sell some books of tickets in work or at home, please contact a Trust committee member, either at our table at the Newport V Swansea game on March 3rd or e-mail [nick.blackandambers@live.co.uk](mailto:nick.blackandambers@live.co.uk) and we will get them to you.

If you just want to buy a few tickets, the same applies.

We need the money and ticket stubs back by 6th April so we don't have too much time. Any help will be greatly appreciated.



Prizes include Golf at St. Pierre, Gourmet meals, Seats at International matches in Cardiff, Newport Gwent Dragons hospitality package, holidays, cash and much more.