

Old Boys Reunion at the Crusaders

Mar 7, 2008

Celtic Crusaders are having their first annual “old boys reunion” during their first Co-operative National League One game of the season against Dewsbury Rams on Good Friday, 21 March (kick-off 5.10pm). The reunion, which is the start of a tradition and will be held at the first home game of every league season from now on, is part of an exciting day at the Brewery Field which also sees the annual Good Friday under 15 international between Wales and England (kick-off 2.30pm).

All players who have ever turned out for the Crusaders are invited to attend free of charge. They and a guest are invited into President’s Suite for a pre match welcome and a pre match dinner. They can then either watch the game from the comfort of President’s Suite or in the reserved seating in the stand. After the game there will be a reception with the current first team squad.

Any past players who wish to attend can contact Teresa Solder on 01656 640792 or via email tsolder@crusadersrfl.com by Wednesday 19th March.

Crusaders’ assistant coach Anthony Seibold said: “This is a great way to reunite as many of our players as possible on an annual basis. We hope this will be well attended by the old boys and we’re sure that the supporters will be delighted to see some of their old favourites again. It looks like it will be an enjoyable day.”

Crusaders draw Leeds Rhinos in the Cup

Mar 12, 2008

Celtic Crusaders have been drawn away to Super League Champions Leeds Rhinos in the Fourth Round of the Carnegie Challenge Cup. The match is due to be played on the weekend of April 18-20 with the exact day and kick-off time still to be announced.

Crusaders’ Chief Executive David Thompson said: “This is just why we were formed two years ago. We want to play the best teams in world and we’re very excited to be doing just that to be drawn against the World Club Champions. We’ll go up there and we’ll certainly compete and we hope the Crusaders will be playing opponents of this sort of calibre on a regular basis in the not too distant future.”

Crusaders’ Operations Manager Gerald McCarthy added: “This really is progress for us. Playing the World Champions will put us higher up on the rugby league map. Everyone in the club is very excited about this draw.”

Meanwhile the Crusaders have been drawn away to Halifax in the first knockout round of the Northern Rail Cup. The match will be played on the weekend of April 3rd-6th with the exact date and time to be announced.

Divided loyalties for Crusaders fan

Mar 12, 2008

Celtic Crusaders Supporters Club chairman Andy Burns will have divided loyalties when the Welsh side

take on Doncaster RLFC in the Northern Rail Cup at the Brewery Field this Saturday (kick-off 7.30pm). The 41-year old was born and bred in Doncaster but moved down to Caldicot, Gwent eight years ago and became a Crusaders supporter from their very first match in 2006.

“I have been waiting for this fixture from the moment I started supporting the Crusaders,” said Andy, who will wear a specially made shirt on Saturday with one half being an old Crusaders away shirt and the other half a Doncaster shirt.

“I’m a Doncaster lad brought up on Rugby League supporting the Dons from the age of six standing with my dad on the little Kop at their old Tattersfield ground. In those days, victories were very rare, but I do remember the team beating Huyton to end a long losing sequence – great days all the same.

“We had many ups and downs over the years at Doncaster until we finally made it to the top flight in 1994. The old First Division saw us beat St Helens at their place followed by Widnes and Wakefield at home but the dream didn’t last and the club were relegated at the end of the season.

“Recent times I believe have been up and down for Donny but they are now back on track with the capture of Ellery Hanley as their coach. I believe National League Two will be a short stay for them and Super League in 2012 a possibility.”

Following his move to South Wales in 2000, the one thing Andy missed was live Rugby League, until of course the birth of the Crusaders.

He may be a Doncaster fan originally but now he is 100% behind the Crusaders and their Super League goal.

“There is a structure in place at the club,” he added. “They have strong foundations, Conference Rugby is growing and there is a massive determination for Rugby League to succeed and be as strong as Union down here.

“My ambition to see Donny and Crusaders in Super League and although I have Donny blood in my veins, I am a Crusader now.”

Crusaders to face Halifax in the Northern Rail Cup Mar 16, 2008

Celtic Crusaders have been drawn away to Halifax in the first knockout round of the Northern Rail Cup. The match will be played on the weekend of April 3rd-6th with the exact date and time to be announced.

Crusaders and Wales RL announce new partnership Mar 17, 2008

On the eve of their first Co-operative National League One match, Celtic Crusaders have announced a new partnership with the Welsh Rugby League to develop youngsters to play rugby league in Wales.

This partnership will see the appointment of four new officers who will work together to develop rugby

league across the length and breadth of Wales, provide opportunities for players to play at the highest possible level and support the Crusaders' engagement with the local community and the wider Welsh Rugby League community.

Heading the team is Caro Wild who arrives in the principality from London as the Rugby Football League's new General Manager for Wales.

Wild has worked for the RFL for nearly ten years, most recently as Regional Development Manager for London and the South. He will officially start his new role on April 15th.

He said: "I am excited about the challenge of working together with Wales Rugby League and Celtic Crusaders to help grow the sport in Wales.

"I have already met a number of people involved with Rugby League in Wales and have been really impressed with their talent and commitment. I hope I can help these people to move the game forward"

An experienced coach at Conference and Wales junior levels, Dan Clements has been appointed as a Development Officer and he will be assisted by former Crusaders, Sheffield Eagles and Wales star Aled James.

Together they will be in charge of supporting a new strong player pathway which includes the Crusaders Colts side that will play their rugby in the Co-operative Conference National League. Dan has been appointed as Head Coach of this squad. The Colts are seen as vital to the future plans of the Crusaders bringing together players who have played Rugby League for a number of years as well as new players to the sport.

The officers have also organised the recent schools competition, which saw a record number of school teams taking part.

A new Celtic Crusaders Community Development Officer is also being appointed to complete the line-up. The team will be based out of the Crusaders' offices in Bridgend and will work alongside the staff already at the club including Head Coach John Dixon, Operations Manager Gerald McCarthy while local legend Kevin Ellis will bring his knowledge and skills to support the schools and club programmes.

Crusaders' Chief Executive David Thompson said: "This is a significant stage in the development of rugby league in Wales and the UK.

"The Crusaders and WRL have been working together closely since our inception but the formal arrangement we are now entering into will enable us to really promote and develop rugby league, pooling all of our resources and working to common goals.

"Being able to persuade Caro to join us in our joint venture is a massive coup. Caro has done a fantastic job developing rugby league in London and the South and is highly sought after. Caro, and the team he is putting together, will be a massive help in ensuring rugby league reaches its full potential in Wales and beyond."

Welsh Rugby League Executive Chairman Mark Rowley added: “We at the Welsh Rugby League are delighted to be working officially in conjunction with Celtic Crusaders with this partnership. We are very hopeful that the partnership will benefit rugby league throughout the whole of Wales and will not only develop the game domestically but will enable us to build and develop the national side at all levels.”

Celtic Crusaders open their Co-operative National League One season this Friday with a home match against Dewsbury Rams (kick-off 5.10pm) with Wales taking on England at under 16 international level as a curtain raiser at 2.30pm. Both games are at the Brewery Field in Bridgend.

Doncaster game not replayed - Cup dates announced Mar 18, 2008

Following due consideration, the Rugby Football League has determined that the final Northern Rail Cup Group Three qualifying game between Celtic Crusaders and Doncaster RLFC which was postponed due to a waterlogged pitch on Saturday 15th March will not be re-arranged as all qualifying issues relating to the competition have been resolved. The Crusaders won the group with a game in hand.

The Crusaders now face Halifax away from home in the first knockout round of the Northern Rail Cup, a game that it is confirmed will be played on Sunday 6th April, kick-off 3pm.

It will be the Crusaders’ second meeting in eight days with the Yorkshire-based side as the two sides face off at the Brewery Field in a Co-operative National League One match on Saturday 29th March (kick-off 5.30pm).

Meanwhile, the date of the Crusaders’ Carnegie Challenge Cup Fourth Round tie with Super League and World Club Champions, Leeds Rhinos at Headingley has also been confirmed. The game will take place on Friday 18th April, kick-off 8pm.

To travel to either of the above away matches, please contact Andy Burns on 07944 713716 or email supportcrusaders@googlemail.com.

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