

Scully looking forward to Port Talbot return

May 2, 2006, 11:41am

Celtic Crusaders are looking forward to playing an on the road "home" match in Port Talbot on May 7th when they host Leeds-based Hunslet Hawks at the Talbot Athletic Ground aka The World of Hurt, the home of Aberavon Wizards RFC.

Wales' only professional club has had an outstanding start to the season, winning nine out of their first ten matches, scoring an average of 56 points a game in the process. They have attracted fans the length and breadth of the country because of this, and a few old Aberavon favourites are now hoping to win over a few of their old supporters.

Former Fighting Irish stars, Scott O'Kelly, Geraint Davies, Andy Llewellyn, Phil Cushion, Lee Williams, Liam Gadd, Richard Johnson and Dean Scully have all starred in the Crusaders success this season while Johnson and Scully will also be remembered by Wizards fans due to their time at The World of Hurt.

Local lad Scully is the only Welshman to have played in all of the Crusaders matches so far this season. He is enjoying his time at the club and is looking forward to coming back to The World of Hurt.

Scully said: "It will nice to go back there – Aberavon was a great club to play for – the fans were superb and as a pitch, it's not too different from Brewery Field. It's a big pitch with wide open spaces and I always enjoyed playing there.

"I'm looking forward to the match on Sunday May 7th and I think that the Port Talbot locals will come out and support us as we always had massive crowds when I played for the Fighting Irish. They love their rugby league in the area and it's good to bring the Crusaders further down west so people can taste the big match atmosphere."

For ticket information, call 01656 651515 / 658535 or log onto www.celtic-crusaders.com.

Duggan in Team of the Month

May 2, 2006, 11:42am

Celtic Crusaders' full-back Tony Duggan has been named in the LHF Healthplan National League Two Team of the Month for April. He is the only Crusaders player in the 13 that was announced in the May edition of Rugby League World.

Duggan, who was the League's top scorer in April, said: "It's a honour to be picked in my first month of League rugby in the UK. I always do my best for the Crusaders and I'm pleased to have been recognised like this. I hope we have a few more players in May's team."

Brynteg reach Powergen Schools Final

May 12, 2006, 1:24pm

The future of Celtic Crusaders Rugby League Club and Wales Rugby League in general is healthier now than at any other time in the sport's history. The Crusaders are delighted with the news that local Bridgend school, Brynteg High, have reached the national Powergen Champions Schools final for the second year in a row.

Last year, their year seven side won the Cup in front of a full house at the Millennium Stadium, beating Castleford High 40-10. Now, one year older, the lads show no signs of losing their talent after beating Wigan's St Peters Catholic High School 36-10 in the year eight semi-final on Wednesday to qualify for this year's final in London at the end of August.

Crusaders' chief executive Chris O'Callaghan, who is also on the CymruRL board, said: "We're delighted at Brynteg's advance to the Final yet again. They are an outstanding school academically and on the sporting field. Their staff have demonstrated how adept and proficient they are as coaches in harnessing the undoubted talent that exists within Bridgend. To get to the final of this competition for the second year in succession is a monumental achievement and one that surely deserves national recognition. Our assistant coach Kevin Ellis helped them to set up the team last year and has been advising them during this campaign. We hope to welcome these lads into the Crusaders academy within the next few years to help them develop their skills even further – they are a credit to their school, to the town of Bridgend and to the sport of rugby league in Wales and I've every confidence that they will win the Cup yet again."

Both teams contributed to a terrific game. The teams were level at half time after Brynteg took an early lead - a great kick to the corner on the last tackle from stand off Olly Olds was pounced on by Adam Wellington on ten minutes. William Thomas backed that up with a 30-metre charge to score the second try which was converted by Olds.

St Peters hit back through a try from full back Tom Halsall which was converted by Chris Kohler and following good pressure, they leveled just before the break with a try from hooker Aaron Martindale.

In the second half, Brynteg took a stranglehold on the game that St Peters were never to recover from as further tries from centre Thomas were to prove too much. He completed his hat-trick with hard running left centre Rhys Evans also going over for a brace of tries. Rhys' twin brother and captain Ben Evans completed the scoring while man of the match Olds converted three of the tries to establish a convincing win to back up the promise that this fine young team showed in August last year at the Millennium Stadium.

This year's final will be a repeat of last year's as Castleford High have qualified as well. This will be a massive challenge for the Welsh lads as Castleford will be looking to reverse last year's result to take the year eight title.

CymruRL development officer Wayne Williams said: "We can't estimate what a big achievement this is – it shows that it wasn't a fluke when they won the Cup last year. The future is looking bright for them. Some of the lads will now be playing for the Blue Bulls junior side this summer and will also be in contention for the Wales under-13 squad. The Final in London will be a great conclusion to their season, one that they won't be taking lightly as Castleford will be out for revenge."

Brynteg High (Bridgend) 36 St Peters Catholic High School (Wigan) 10

Half time 10 - 10

Teams

Brynteg

1. Adam Wellington
2. Dan James
3. Rhys Evans
4. William Thomas
5. Huw Rosser
6. Oliver Olds (Vice-Capt)
7. Scott Bryant
8. Aaron Williams
9. Rhys Pilliner
10. Chris Morgan
11. Alex Evans
12. Tyler Williams
13. Ben Evans (Captain)
14. Huw Robinson
15. Jay Robbins
16. Adam Phillips
17. Patrick Roberts

St Peters

1. Tom Halsall
2. Sam France
3. James Turner
4. Lewis Aitchenson
5. James Hill
6. Phil Hamnett
7. Chris Kohler
8. Josh Pendlebury
9. Aaron Martindale
10. Mike Cox
11. Luke Turner
12. Danny Grogan
13. Tom Macoulay
14. Sam Pepper
15. Declan Woodward
16. Mike Cheetham
17. Matty Sykes

Crusader picked for a Great Britain squad

May 16, 2006, 10:06am

Celtic Crusaders are celebrating their first Great Britain representative after hooker Lloyd O'Connor was selected for the Great Britain Students tour to Australia this summer.

O'Connor, the son of Maesteg RFC coach Leighton, is a student at Pencoed College and has scored three tries in five appearances for the Crusaders' first team so far this season.

Crusaders' chief executive Chris O'Callaghan said: "This is a great honour for the club. We're delighted that he's got in the side and it is further progress for him on the rugby league ladder. It'll be a trip of a lifetime for the lad and we look forward to welcoming him back to the squad later this season when I'm sure that the knowledge that he's gained down under will assist him in challenging for a regular place in the Crusaders' first team squad."

Ben Rawlings, Dennis Pugh, Gareth Thirsk and Matt Jackson are the other Welsh representatives in the 26-man squad.

The "Academic Lions" will be looking to regain the "Academic Ashes" that the Australians have won in the last two series.