

We are the champions

Sept 8, 2007, 10:39pm

Celtic Crusaders were crowned champions of Co-operative National League Two on Saturday night after Barrow Raiders beat Featherstone Rovers 30-4. The Crusaders play their final match of the season at Gateshead Thunder on Sunday (kick-off 3pm).

But win, lose or draw, they will lift the trophy at the end of the match.

"This championship is a credit to all the hard work that everyone in the club has done," said Crusaders operations manager Gerald McCarthy.

"The biggest thanks of all go to Leighton Samuel for without him none of this would have happened."

Crusaders will play in National League One in 2008, just a division below the likes of Bradford and St Helens in Super League.

Van Dijk scoops top honour at awards night

Sept 15, 2007, 11:28am

Celtic Crusaders' skipper Jace Van Dijk scooped the top honour at the National League Two champions' end of season awards night at the Brewery Field on Friday.

The half-back was awarded the "Player of the Year" trophy which is a fine reward for his leadership throughout 2007 where he created a number of tries, scored eight himself, kicked 62 goals and skippered the side to a 12 match unbeaten run at the culmination of the season.

"It's an honour to win the award and a pleasure to captain such a great team," he commented.

Tony Duggan, British rugby league's top try scorer for the second year in a row, couldn't quite match the five trophies that he bagged in the 2006 awards night.

The full-back, who scored 40 tries in 2007, had to settle for three awards this year – "Top Try Scorer", "Best Back" and "Try of the Season" – the latter for his 90 metre effort away at Oldham Roughyeds on August 30th.

Van Dijk and Duggan were also honoured for making 50 first team appearances for the Crusaders, as were Hywel Davies, Luke Young and Damien Quinn.

Quinn also picked up the "Top Points Scorer" trophy for his 20 tries and 86 goals while Davies shared the "Strength and Conditioning Award" with fellow Welshman Grant Epton.

In other playing awards, former Leeds Rhinos prop Jamie I'Anson won "Young Player of the Year", "Hit of the Season" was won by Chris Beasley for a tackle in the Oldham Roughyeds home match, Neil Budworth picked up the "Best Forward" trophy, Neale Wyatt was the "Supporters' Player of the Year" and Darren Mapp was "Players' Player of the Year".

Off the field, Crusaders' kitman Walter Phillips won "Volunteer of the Year", Supporters

Club chairman Andy Burns was "Supporter of the Year" and Teresa Solder, the PA to the chief executive won the "Clubman of the Year" trophy, renamed "Clublady of the Year" for the night.

The night also served as a farewell to seven Crusaders players. Josh Cale, Luke Young and Rob Toshack are all considering a number of offers from clubs in Australia, Dean Fitzgerald has signed for Tonmawr rugby union club while Andy Boothroyd has returned to Batley Bulldogs. Aurélien Cologni and Richard Johnston have also left the club, the latter to join the police force.

Supporters were also able to have their photo taken with the National League Two trophy at the gala event.

Crusaders player to win award

Sept 28, 2007, 4:23pm

The Rugby Football League confirmed today that a Celtic Crusaders player will walk off with the Co-operative National League Two Player of the Year award for the second year in a row when the trophy is presented on Tuesday evening at Elland Road in Leeds.

All three nominations for the NL2 Player of the Year category are from the Welsh club who were crowned League Two champions on September 9th.

Crusaders' skipper Jace Van Dijk will be defending his trophy while the other two nominees are the UK's top try scorer Tony Duggan and former Harlequins hooker Neil Budworth.

John Dixon is up against Barrow Raiders' Paul Crarey and London Skolars' Latham Tawhai for the Coach of the Year award.

Crusaders' Operations Manager Gerald McCarthy said: "This is a massive honour for the club. To have three nominations for the player of the year award is an outstanding achievement but it just shows how hard the lads have worked all season. Good luck to John as well in the coach of the year category. He's up against tough opposition for his award though. Our two matches against Barrow showed us how Paul has coached his team while Latham has done wonders at the Skolars this year. It's certain to be an exciting night on Tuesday."

As soon as the winners are announced from Elland Road on Tuesday night, they will be posted on this website first (technology allowing!).