

# MONMOUTHSHIRE v NORTH WALES 1982

## SEMI FINAL WELSH COUNTIES CUP

### COUNT-DOWN FOR THE COUNTIES FINAL

Rugby people in Monmouthshire can be proud of the County's performance against the Maori last Wednesday. The forwards in particular went well but one of the greatest pleasures was that the match was played in sporting spirit. Everyone got on with the game, a great credit to rugby in this neglected part of the Welsh Empire. Neglected because only one Maori fixture was allocated to an area packed with top sides and fine players. District 'A' of the Welsh Rugby Union is the biggest of all and some of the most famous clubs in Britain are contained in it. The fine sporting and skilful exhibition by our County side last week must indicate to those who allocate touring games the need to remember Monmouthshire in the future. It is a large area full of rugby supporters who should be rewarded by having two fixtures in other tours. There is an interesting development in English County rugby this season and all the matches are now played on Saturdays. Some of the Midland clubs do not support the idea and their players have a free choice whether to play for the County or their club. There are no fixed dates in Welsh County rugby but that could be a good idea and quite possible. Club fixtures are known in advance and if County games are also planned ahead everyone would benefit. Englishmen are more County orientated in their everyday lives than we are. A Man of Kent, a Lancastrian, a Devonian all feel allegiance to their County. In Wales we are North-South, then East-West and in this part of the world, valley or coast. Nevertheless County rugby can play an important part and there are many who devote their time to it. North meets South tonight with Monmouthshire determined to get to the final once more. Last season the County lost 10-6 against Pembrokeshire at Haverfordwest, the winners having beaten North Wales 34-9 in the semi-final. The last time Monmouthshire won the final was at Pontypool in 1977-8. Glamorgan were beaten 13-12 after being 12-0 in the lead. Brian Gregory of Pontypool led the revival and Ebbw Vale's Clive Burgess was man of the match. Two members of that side played at Newport last Wednesday — Peter Lewis and Goff Davies of Pontypool. Monmouthshire got to the final after beating North Wales 45-0 at Ebbw Vale. The last County final played at Ebbw Vale was in April 1973 when Breconshire were beaten 28-12. Four members of the home team are still playing senior rugby — Paul Evans (then of Newport, now captain of Newbridge), Bobby Windsor (Pontypool), Mike Dowling (Newbridge) and Colin James (Tredegar). Apart from County matches, North and South Wales meet through the Welsh Cup competition, the first round proper of which starts next week. Three North Wales clubs have reached the second round over the years. Wrexham and Ruthin have each done that four times and Bangor once. Ruthin played at Ebbw Vale in 1975-6 losing 36-6. When we pay tribute to those engaged in the administration of County rugby in a nation where club rugby is first class and very intensive, we should also mention those in North Wales who keep the rugby flag flying proudly. The soccer code is more popular there but individuals who have played for Wales and the fine clubs in the North show that rugby football is now a completely national game. Monmouthshire remains a strong bastion of the game. Clubs and County must be ever vigilant that our status as a rugby area is maintained and recognised. Next season, after many years, a Gwent man will become President of the Welsh Rugby Union. Ken Gwilym will do a fine job and will be pleased that one of the Big Five, Terry Cobner, is also a Monmouthshire man. It's a long way to come to play a game of rugby but North Wales enjoy it as much as we do. It's a great opportunity for everyone to meet on and off the field in the common cause. After aggravating and ill-tempered incidents on some rugby fields recently it remains a matter of pride that in the only Maori tour match played in this vast reservoir of rugby, sportsmanship and good rugby won.

R.E.L.

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Season 1982-83

Eugene Cross Park



MONDAY 8TH NOVEMBER 1982, KICK OFF 7.00 P.M.

## MONMOUTHSHIRE

V

## NORTH WALES

OFFICIAL PROGRAMME 20p

# WELSH BITTER.

## MONMOUTHSHIRE

Peter Lewis (Pontypool)	15
Goff Davies (Pontypool)	14
Gary Lawrance (Ebbw Vale)	13
Rob Ackerman (London Welsh)	12
Bleddyn Taylor (Pontypool)	11
Jeff Stephenson (Ebbw Vale)	10
David Bishop (Pontypool)	9
Sid Wharton (Tredegar)	1
Mike Watkins (Newport)	2
A.N. Other	3
John Perkins (Pontypool)	4
Robert Norster (Cardiff)	5
Richard Powell (Newport)	6
John Williams (Tredegar)	7
Eddy Butler (Pontypool)(Capt)	8

### Replacements:

K. Hallam (Ruthin), S. Jarvis (Wrexham), R. Ellis (Ruthin),  
S. Harris (Delyn), T. Phillips (Ruthin)

Ebbw Vale Kit supplied by — Umbro International Limited

## NORTH WALES

G. Williams (Wrexham)
B. Winne (Mold)
M. Smith (Bro-Ffestiniog)
R. Jones (Wrexham)
D. Jones (Wrexham)
M. Ferguson (Mold)
D. Cheeseborough (Delyn)
G. Harris (Wrexham)
C. Peters (Ruthin)
R. Bold (Mold)
S. Lloyd (Wrexham)
G. Owen (Ruthin)
F. Leach (Colwyn Bay)
D. Morgan (Mold)
G. Jones (Mold)

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### CLUB NOTES...

The Monmouthshire County Rugby Union extends a hearty welcome to its friends from the North. Previous games between the County and North Wales have been of high standard and greatly enjoyed. May tonight's match also bring entertainment for players and spectators.

This is a semi-final of the Burnley Building Society Welsh Counties Championship. The winner will meet the victors of the Pembrokeshire and Glamorgan semi-final in the second week of December.

Rhymney, Gloucestershire, Breconshire and Glamorgan were all beaten in a series of games that led to last week's game with the Maoris. The spirit and skill of all the players who took part in those matches indicated the high quality of rugby in Monmouthshire and the County pays tribute to the Clubs, the coaches and the players for maintaining the traditional standard of the game in this part of Wales.

The County Union thanks the Ebbw Vale Rugby Club for its help and practical assistance in staging this game and the Ebbw Vale Welfare Association for the use of this splendid ground.

Eugene Cross Park, Ebbw Vale has been the venue for County Cricket and County Rugby matches many times and the help of everyone is greatly appreciated.

The North Wales officials and players are warmly welcomed to a heartland of the Welsh national game. The fixture brings together rugby men from the top to the bottom of the country and that can only be good for the game.

**COVER PIC:** Terry Cabner, Member of the Welsh 'Big Five' and Monmouthshire Coach, in action on this ground, September 1980.

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