



BLACKTHORN



Volume 1 Issue 8

BATH RUGBY

VS

SWANSEA

**Heineken Cup
Pool B Round Five**



**Tuesday
11 January 2000
Kick-Off 7.30pm**



**OFFICIAL
MATCH DAY
MAGAZINE**

£2.50



Bath Rugby vs Swansea



Bath Rugby

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No	Player	Position	Player	No
15	Matt Perry	Full Back	Kevin Morgan	15
14	Iain Balshaw	Right Wing	Richard Rees	14
13	Kevin Maggs	Centre	Shaun Payne	13
12	Mike Tindall	Centre	Mark Taylor	12
11	Adedayo Adebayo	Left Wing	Mathew Robinson	11
10	Mike Catt	Fly Half	Lee Davies	10
9	Jon Preston	Scrum Half	Rhodri Jones	9
1	Victor Ubogu	Prop	Darren Morris	1
2	Andy Long	Hooker	Garin Jenkins	2
3	John Mallet	Prop	Ben Evans	3
4	Martin Haag (Capt)	Lock	Tyrone Maullin	4
5	Steve Borthwick	Lock	Andy Moore	5
6	Angus Gardiner	Flanker	Paul Moriarty	6
7	Ben Clarke	Flanker	Colin Charvis	7
8	Dan Lyle	No 8	Lee Jones	8
Replacements				
16	Ricky Pellow		Andy Booth	16
17	Mark Regan		Alex Lawson	17
18	Clem Boyd		Richard Jones	18
19	Phil de Glanville		Michael Jones	19
20	Tokunbo Adebayo		Chris Wells	20
21	Gavin Thomas		Paul Arnold	21
22	Nathan Thomas		Dean Thomas	22

Referee: Joel Jutge Touch Judges: P Thomas, G Borreani



Swansea's dramatic injury time victory over Bath in a dour rain-swept encounter at St Helens has set the stage for what is certain to be another titanic battle when the two teams lock horns again at the Rec tonight, in what will surely be a sudden death shoot-out for Heineken European Cup survival.

Had Bath triumphed in the away clash, after leading 9-0 with just six minutes remaining, thanks to three Jon Preston penalties, then they would have been favourites to finish second in Pool B behind unbeaten hitherto Toulouse and stand a chance of reaching the last eight.

But instead, up popped live-wire fly half replacement Arwel Thomas to snatch a penalty and then convert his own precocious solo try and suddenly Bath's dreams of a Cup conquest were thrown right back into the melting pot as the all-whites squeezed home their own fading hopes of European progress.

Without doubt, Thomas's virtuoso performance has left both sides on a qualification knife edge. But if anything Bath now have the harder task ahead of them and defeat tonight would undoubtedly shatter their chances of further progress.

However there is no doubt that the Welsh side will be fired up to prove that the win in the first leg was no lucky fluke and Bath will be well aware that the former Welsh champions are quite capable of coming to the Rec and repeating the dose.

Despite showing fluctuating form in their Welsh/Scottish league results to date - they currently lie seventh in the table having won six, lost five and drawn one of their 12 league games so far, Swansea are still a formidable prospect for any side to face and possess enough class and firepower in their forwards and backs to trouble the best.

Coach John Plumtree has assembled a powerful squad that would probably boast a better league record but for Rugby World Cup calls which robbed him of established stars like hooker Garin Jenkins, flanker Colin Charvis and centres Scott Gibbs and Mark Taylor after the St Helens outfit had made a promising start to the season.

After an initial setback at Bridgend (16-21), Swansea slipped into top gear for the rest of September recording successive wins over Llanelli (36-27), Caerphilly (34-18) and Glasgow Caledonians (28-13) before

After that they hit a slump for the rest of October losing three successive league games to Neath (23-32), Pontypridd (17-23) and Edinburgh Reivers (31-34), before winning a controversial clash 47-13 at Ebbw Vale in a contest which saw four players sent off.

Swansea suffered a fifth league setback losing 34-25 at home to fierce rivals Cardiff, but began their European Cup campaign in style by eclipsing Italian side Padova 66-19 at St Helens in their pool B opener. The heavy defeat in Toulouse soon put that in perspective, but they bounced back with a convincing 34-8 revenge win over Bridgend and followed that success with the crucial home win over Bath.

Although their form has been patchy so far, Swansea undoubtedly possess the power and flair to repeat that narrow victory at the Rec. They boast a daunting pack in which the spiky aggression of Jenkins and the experienced foraging skills of Charvis are often inspirational, and they will be ideally suited if conditions at the Rec are similar to the mudbath at St Helens.

However, if it is a dry night Swansea will have plenty of pace, power and flair in their back line to stretch Bath to the limit even without their international half-back pairing of Thomas and Robert Jones, who have come under strong pressure from promising youngsters Lee Davies and Rhodri Jones this season.

The midfield duel between the vastly experienced Gibbs and Taylor and a Bath centre pairing shorn of injured England star Jeremy Guscott could well decide the outcome while on the flank Swansea have another dangerous international in Matthew Robinson who could also prove a match-winner if he is given space to stretch his legs.

All in all it looks certain to be another tense and memorable Anglo-Welsh encounter in a long tradition of such contests at the Rec, providing a feast of old-fashioned rugby to swell the hearts of a partisan crowd.

