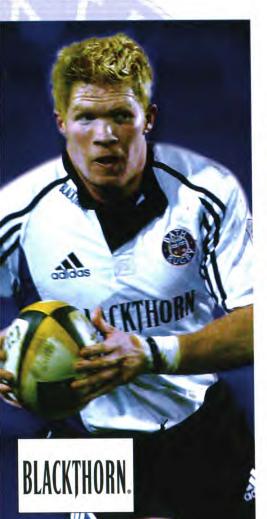




PARKER PEN CHALLENGE CUP



round two



adidas

TODAY'S OFFICIALS
REFEREE JOEL DUME (FRANCE)
TOUCH JUDGES CHRISTOPHE BERDOS,

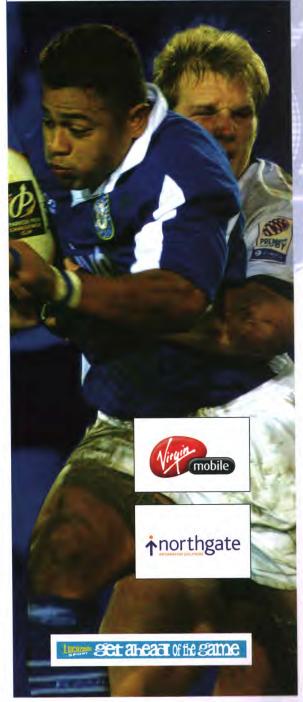
JEAN-PIERRE PELLAPRAL



TODAY'S TEAMS



IAIN BALSHAW	(15) FULL BACK	MATT JAMES
SIMON DANIELLI	(14) WING	CRAIG WARLOW
KEVIN MAGGS	(13) CINTRE	GARETH THOMAS (C)
MIKETINDALL -	(12) CINTRE	SIUA TAUMALOLO
ALEX CROCKETT -	(11) WING	AISEA HAVILI
OLLY BARKLEY	(10) FLY HALF	SIMON MANNIX
GARETH COOPER	(9) SCRUM HALF	SILIO MARTENS
DAVID BARNES	(f) PROP	CHRISTIAN LOADER
JONATHAN HUMPHREYS(C)	(2) HOOKER	GARETH WILLIAMS
JOHN MALLETT	(3) PROP	CHRIS HORSMAN
STEVE BORTHWICK -	(4) LOCK	DEINIOL JONES
ANDY BEATTIE	(5) TOCK	NATHAN BUDGETT
GAVINTHOMAS -	(6) FLANKER	MAAMA MOLITIKA
ADAM VANDER	(7) FLANKER	RICHARD BRYAN
NATHAN THOMAS	(8) NO.8	CORY HARRIS
ANDY WILLIAMS	(10)	PHIL BOOTH
LEE MEARS	(17)	JOHN THIEL
ALESSIO GALASSO	(1)0	RYAN JONES
CHRIS MALONE	(19)	SHAWN VAN RENSBURG
TOM VOYCE	(20)	BEN PHILLIPS
JAMES SCAYSBROOK -	ap	HUW HARRIES
ANDY LLOYD	cela	RICHARD MUSTOE





Bridgend By Dom Rumbles



Bridgend's recent results have shown that they are one of the form sides in the Principality at present

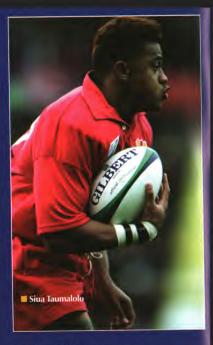


ast weekend's European action instilled a bit of pride back into Welsh rugby after the hammering that it has received over the past couple of weeks. Llanelli, Newport and Swansea all defeated Zurich Premiership opposition in the Heineken Cup, whilst Pontypridd and Bridgend have been flying the flag for the Celtic nation in the Parker Pen Challenge Cup.

Bridgend staged an impressive 28-26 victory over Bath Rugby in a wonderful match at the Brewery Field last Friday night, and have proven that there is most definitely life left in Welsh club rugby despite recent rumblings of mergers and provincial sides. Indeed, Bridgend's recent results have shown that they are one of the form sides in the Principality at present. In warming up for this second-round tie, Allan Lewis's side did the double over the Scarlets in home and away friendlies, and despite their lack of competitive rugby owing to their early exit from the Celtic league are looking fresh, sharp and dangerous.

The two-point victory over Bath Rugby in the first leg was a significant psychological one for the Welsh side as they can go into this afternoon's match knowing that with honours almost even in a 'winner takes all' match, they can compete with English sides from the much-admired Zurich Premiership.

Captain Gareth Thomas is back to his best and the winner of 61 caps for Wales has proven an inspirational captain for his side. He is a solid centre who takes a lot of stopping when he hits the line at pace. His two well-taken tries in the first leg set up the advantage for Bridgend and his excellent recent form for his club has placed him firmly back in favour



with the Wales management.

A few familiar faces will be making their return to the Rec this afternoon. Bridgend coach Richard Webster was Bath Rugby's captain during the 1998/99 season. A wonderful character, 'Webby' has been one of the driving forces behind the resurgence at the Brewery Field over the past couple of seasons.

Former England Under 21 prop Chris Horsman will also be making his first return to the Rec after joining Bridgend via Bedford. Chris is a powerful scrummager and brings a lot to the Ravens' game as he is blessed with pace and is also an extremely effective ball carrier. The third former Bath man in the Bridgend squad is Richard Bryan, who has been playing well at number eight this season.

A lot of Bridgend's play is based on a tremendous platform presented by a strong pack that can scrummage extremely well, and they will be looking to exploit this area this afternoon. However, the Ravens also possess a powerful set of direct-running backs, with Tongans Siua Taumalolo and Aisea Havili at the heart of their power play. This will be an absorbing contest.