

14.05.2020

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Erthygl i'r Wasg Press Release

50 mlynedd o'r Urdd. 22 Llew. 35,000 o gefnogwyr. 1 gêm rygbi rhyfeddol.

Bydd rhaglen arbennig S4C yn edrych yn ôl ar gêm rygbi rhyfeddol a drefnwyd i ddathlu hanner can mlwyddiant mudiad yr Urdd. Ar 26 Ebrill 1972, daeth sêr disgleiriaf dimau rygbi Cymru a Llewod Prydain ac Iwerddon at ei gilydd yng Nghaerdydd i chwarae mewn gêm elusennol i gefnogi Jiwbilî hanner can mlynedd Urdd Gobaith Cymru ac i ddathlu taith Iwyddiannus y Llewod y flwyddyn flaenorol.

Ac am y tro cyntaf ers y darllediad gwreiddiol, bydd uchafbwyntiau estynedig o'r gêm yn cael eu dangos eto, yn y rhaglen **Urdd 50: Barry John XV v Carwyn James XV**, i'w gweld ar nos Fawrth 26 Mai am 9.00, ar S4C.

Tra bod gwirfoddolwyr yn prysur drefnu'r gêm, fe ddisgynnodd y cyfrifoldeb o ddenu chwaraewyr ar ysgwyddau dau fab o Gefneithin, a dau o gyn aelodau'r Urdd - Barry John a Carwyn James - a ni wnaethon nhw siomi.

Gyda Barry yn gapten ar dîm o sêr rygbi Cymru, a Carwyn yn hyfforddi tîm o fawrion gwledydd eraill ynysoedd Prydain ac Iwerddon, roedd 22 o'r chwaraewyr yn aelodau o garfan y Llewod a lwyddodd i ennill draw yn Seland Newydd yn Haf 1971, gan gynnwys y capten, John Dawes, Gareth Edwards, J.P.R Williams, David Duckham, Peter Dixon, Gordon Brown a sawl un arall.

Dyweddodd John Evans, ysgrifennydd a threfnydd ar bwyllogor y digwyddiad: "Naw ohonom ni oedd ar y pwyllogor, llond dau ddwrn o bobl, ac mi oedd pawb yn mor weithgar. Y trefniadau gwreiddiol oedd bod y gêm yn cael ei chwarae ar gae Caerdydd, Parc yr Arfa, ac ar y pryd roedd pawb yn hapus iawn gyda hynny.

"Roedd angen i ni argraffu'r tocynnau, ac mi roeddwn ni'n meddwl mai rhywle rhwng deuddeg a deunaw mil, ar y mwyaf, fyddai eisiau dod i'r gêm. Ond ar ôl i'r datganiad fynd i'r wasg, o fewn pythefnos roedd yr holl docynnau wedi eu gwerthu. Wrth gwrs, roedd cefnogwyr rygbi cyffredin yn ymfalchïo yn y ffaith eu bod nhw'n cael gweld Llewod Carwyn a Chymru, ar nos Fercher yng Nghaerdydd! Ond wedyn, fe benderfynwyd gofyn i'r Undeb os gawn chwarae'r gêm ar y maes cenedlaethol, drws nesaf.

Yn sgil y galw aruthrol, fe wnaethpwyd cais i chwarae'r gêm yng nghartref tîm rygbi Cymru; fe gytunodd Undeb Rygbi Cymru a chlwbiau Cymru yn unfrydol i ganiatáu'r gêm i gael ei chwarae ar y Maes Cenedlaethol. Ym mhen dim, roedd cartref Trysorydd Cenedlaethol yr Urdd, Bob Roberts, a'i wraig Ann, wedi ei droi mewn i'r "swyddfa brysuraf yng Nghaerdydd," yn ôl Prif Weithredwr y mudiad ar y pryd, R.E.Griffith.

Dyweddodd Ann Roberts: "Roedd yr holl ddiddordeb yn y gêm yn anhygoel, i ddweud y gwir. Roedd aelodau o'r aelwyd yn dod drosodd i'n tŷ ni bob nos i fynd drwy'r holl geisiadau am docynnau, a pharatoi i anfon tocynnau i bawb oedd wedi eu harchebu. Ac yn y fan yna fuon ni am dri mis llawn.

"Doedd y ffôn byth yn stopio. Roeddwn i'n gweithio fel athrawes ar y pryd, ac mi oeddwn i'n dod adref amser cinio i ateb y ffôn - roedd e'n canu'n ddi-stop. Fe gymerodd dros ein bywydau, yn sicr, ond mi gawsom ni lot mawr o hwyl a llawer iawn o bleser."

Ychwanega John Evans: "Roedd rhaid cysylltu efo pob un o'r chwaraewyr, ysgrifennu atyn nhw, trefnu popeth. Chwaraewyr o Loegr, Yr Alban, Iwerddon ac wrth gwrs Cymru. Roedd David Duckham yn dod i lawr o Salford, er enghraift. Gêm yr amaturiaid oedd e'r adeg hynny, felly dim ond treuliau roedd pawb yn gofyn amdano. Ac ar ddiwedd, mi gawsom y cwbl lot ynghyd yng Nghaerdydd, ar noson fwyn o Ebrill, ac mae'r dyddiad yn fy mhen i o hyd ac o hyd."

Fe dalodd waith caled yr Urdd ar ei ganfed. Fe werthwyd 35,000 o docynnau i'r gêm gan godi £15,000 i'r mudiad. Fe ddaeth yr achlysur sylw i'r mudiad yn y wasg ac ar deledu yn ogystal, gyda'r rhaglen BBC, Sportsnight with Coleman, yn dangos uchafbwyntiau o'r gêm.

Efallai'r peth mwyaf arwyddocaol am y gêm o safbwyt cefnogwyr rygbi, yw mai dyma oedd gêm olaf yng ngyrfa Barry John. Naw ddiwrnod wedi'r gêm, fe gyhoeddodd ei bod yn rhoi'r gorau i chwarae. Ond am gêm ryfeddol i orffen ei yrfa. Fe ddisgleiriodd yr holl sêr, gan sgorio ceisiau godidog a thaclon ffyrnid a ddigfaddawd. Ond, a enillodd Barry John yn ei gêm olaf erioed? Bydd rhaid gwylio'r rhaglen, **Urdd 50: Barry John XV v Carwyn James XV**, i weld.

Meddai Dyfrig Davies, Cadeirydd Urdd Gobaith Cymru: "Roedd hon wir yn gêm ac achlysur gwbl unigryw a lwyddodd i ddenu cyhoeddusrwydd pell gyrhaeddol i'r Urdd. Mae'n bwysig ein bod ni'n cofio cyfraniad anhygoel y bobl a drefnodd popeth, gan gynnwys cadeirydd pwylgor y digwyddiad, Dewi Bebb, ac wrth gwrs, Llywydd Anrhydeddus yr Urdd, y diweddar Bob Roberts, a fu farw cwta fis yn ôl, a'i wraig Ann. Rydym yn falch iawn i weld y bydd S4C yn dangos y gêm unwaith eto, mae'n deyrnedd cwbl addas i waith Bob Roberts dros fudiad Urdd Gobaith Cymru."

Urdd 50: Barry John XV v Carwyn James XV

Nos Fawrth 26 Mai, 9.00

Ar alw: S4C Clic, iPlayer a llwyfannau eraill

Cynhyrchiad BBC Cymru ar gyfer S4C

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50 years of the Urdd. 22 Lions. 35,000 fans. 1 extraordinary rugby match.

A special S4C programme will look back upon an extraordinary rugby match held to celebrate 50 years of the Urdd Gobaith Cymru movement.

On 26 April 1972, the brightest stars from the Wales and British and Irish Lions teams came together in Cardiff to play in a charity match in celebration of the 50th year Jubilee of the Urdd and the success of the previous summer's Lions tour.

For the first time since the original broadcast, extended highlights from the match will be shown again, on **Urdd 50: Barry John XV v Carwyn James XV**, which will be shown on Tuesday 26 May at 9.00pm, on S4C.

While volunteers were busily arranging the match, the responsibility for recruiting players fell on the shoulders of two former members of the Urdd, and two sons of Cefneithin – Barry John and Carwyn James – and they did not disappoint.

With Barry captaining a team of Wales rugby stars, and Carwyn coaching a team of players from all four nations of the British and Irish Isles, a total of 22 stars from the triumphant 1971 Lions tour to New Zealand agreed to play, including captain John Dawes, Gareth Edwards, J.P.R Williams, David Duckham, Peter Dixon, Gordon Brown and several others.

John Evans, secretary and organiser on the event committee, said: "There were nine of us on the committee, two handfuls of people, and everyone worked so hard. The original plan was that the match would be played on Cardiff's pitch, the Arms Park, and at that stage, everyone was more than happy with that.

"We needed to print tickets and we predicted that somewhere between 12,000 and 18,000 at the most, would want to watch the match. But within a fortnight of the press release being issued, all the tickets had been sold. Of course, casual rugby fans were thrilled that they could see Carwyn's Lions and Wales play on a Wednesday night in Cardiff! So it was then decided that we would ask for permission from the Union if we could play the match next door, at the National Stadium."

With such extraordinary demand, a special request was made to play the game at the home of the Wales rugby team; the Welsh Rugby Union and representatives of Welsh clubs unanimously agreed to allow the match to be played at National Stadium. Suddenly, the home of Urdd National Treasurer, Bob Roberts, and his wife, Ann, was transformed into the "busiest office in Cardiff," according to the Urdd Chief Executive at the time, R.E.Griffith.

Ann Roberts said: "The interest in the game was incredible, to be honest. Members of the Urdd would come over to our house every evening to go through all the ticket applications and prepare to send the tickets out to everyone. And that's where we were for three months.

"The phone would never stop ringing. I worked as a teacher at the time and I used to come home during lunch time to answer the phone – it rang non-stop. It certainly took over our lives, but we had a lot of fun and great pleasure."

John Evans added: "We had to contact each one of the players, write to them and make all the arrangements. Players from England, Scotland, Ireland, and of course, Wales. David Duckham had to travel down from Salford, for example. It was an amateur sport at the time and all anyone asked for was their expenses. And in the end, we got the whole lot in Cardiff, on a warm Wednesday evening in April, and that date has stayed in my head to this day."

The hard work of the volunteers paid dividends. 35,000 tickets were sold for the match, raising £15,000 for the movement. And it brought the Urdd significant press coverage from Wales and beyond, with popular BBC programme, Sportsnight with Coleman, broadcasting highlights from the match.

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of the game from a rugby point of view, is that the match was to be the last in Barry John's illustrious career. Nine days after the match, he announced his retirement from the sport. But what a game to bow out on. Each star played their part in a wonderful spectacle, full of glorious tries and fierce tackling. But did Barry John win in his last ever game? Watch **Urdd 50: Barry John XV v Carwyn James XV** to find out.

Dyfrig Davies, Urdd Gobaith Cymru Chairman, said: "This was a truly unique rugby match and occasion, which brought far-reaching coverage for the Urdd. It is important that we remember the incredible contribution of the people who organised the whole event, including the chairman of the event committee, Dewi Bebb, and of course, Honorary President of the Urdd, the late Bob Roberts, who recently passed away, and his wife Ann. We are delighted that S4C will be showing highlights of the game once again and it is a fitting tribute to Bob Roberts' contribution to the Urdd Gobaith Cymru movement."

Urdd 50: Barry John XV v Carwyn James XV
Tuesday, 26 May, 9.00
On demand: S4C Clic, iPlayer and other platforms
A BBC Cymru production for S4C