

# History of Llanelli RFC

Llanelli is one of the most famous rugby teams in the world. It is the focal point for one of the most supported rugby clubs in the world, the Scarlets – with a rich and unrivalled rugby heritage.

Llanelli's first recorded game in 1876 was at Peoples Park. The home side played in blue. However, it is thought that the club had been formed a few years earlier. As a result members, players and supporters of Llanelli RFC celebrated the club's centenary in 1972.

The 1904/05 season was a historic one as it saw the club move to their "new" pitch at Stradey which is where the Scarlet played until October 2008 when they moved to their new stadium Park Scarlet. The first game on this pitch was on 15/10/1904 when Llanelli played Swansea, a game which they lost.

The famous Scarlets shirt was worn for the first time in 1884 against an

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- People's Park in Llanelli was used for practices. The Llanelli colours were then dark blue with high collared jerseys and tight trousers reaching well below the knee. The first real match was against Cambrian Club, Swansea on 1 January 1876. On 18/09/1879 it was announced that the Club had succeeded in getting the Stradey cricket ground for their practices and matches. The first official match played at Stradey the Llanelli Club was against Neath in the Challenge Cup on 29/11/1879.

In 1882/83 the team colours changed to rose and primrose stripes. In 1883/84 they changed again to red and chocolate quarters. However, on Easter Monday 14 April 1884 everyone saw sense and the Llanelli team took the field in Scarlet jerseys – complete with scarlet gold braided caps. The occasion was the visit of the full Irish team who had played Wales on the Saturday and were making a stop on their way home. The Scarlet jersey was here to stay and Llanelli RFC is now known throughout the world as “The Scarlets”.

# The Glorious Years

The following are legends in the game:

Albert Jenkins, Ivor Jones, Lewis Jones, Barry John, Derek and Scott Quinnell, R H Williams, Phil Bennett, Ray Gravell, Carwyn James, Delme Thomas, JJ Williams, Nigel Davies Terry Davies, Jonathan Davies, Phil Davies, Ieuan Evans, Stephen Jones- to name but a few.

Such has been the contribution of Llanelli to Welsh Rugby that the Club can proudly boast no fewer than 176 Internationals. This figure includes 167 Welsh Caps, one Scottish International, Ian McGregor, two Irish International, Simon and Guy Easterby, one Croatian, Frano Botica, two American, David Hodges and Luke Gross and two Tongans, Salesi Finau and Johnny Koloi and one Canadian Jamie Cudmore. The first Llanelli players to play for Wales were Harry Bowen and Alfred Cattell who played against England in 1882.

Llanelli have played all the major touring countries including New Zealand Maoris, New Zealand All Blacks, Canada, South Africa, Australia, Tonga, Fiji, Western Samoa and Romania, and some of their greatest achievements have been against these countries having defeated all of them except for South Africa.

Llanelli have also toured abroad to such places as France, Russia, Germany, Italy, Jersey, South Africa, Canada, Spain, Australia, Fiji , USA. Hungary and Slovenia

Llanelli have provided 14 players to the British Lions test team plus 7 other players to the Lions Squad and three ex-players in Carwyn James (Coach), Alun Thomas (Manager) and Clive Rowlands (Manager) of the British Lions tours of 1971, 1974 and 1989 respectively.

Eighteen Llanelli players have captained Wales, the latest being Scott Quinnell v South Africa on 26/11/00 and David Hodges was the current U.S.A. captain prior to his retirement on 03.07.04.

# Images of Llanelli RFC



This team has a significant historical background