

# S Glam p o r t

ISSUE 1 | MAY 2013

Meet the Scholars -  
Exclusive interviews with the  
latest sporting talent off the  
Glam conveyor belt

Making big waves -  
Just a year into their existence,  
Glamorgan's water polo side  
reach the Shield Cup final

Glamorgan Sport Park  
plays host to Rugby World Cup  
winners New Zealand



Interview with  
football manager  
Steve Savage



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# ADVERTISEMENT

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Sports scheme grows



The road to success



All the hot topics covered





## Treforest all good for All Blacks

Photos: Tom Griffin Words: Dan Lewis



Above: New Zealand arrive at Glamorgan Sport Park; A group of students meet All Blacks' media manager Joe Locke

**G**LAMORGAN Sport Park has received the seal of approval from rugby World Champions New Zealand - who paid a visit to the University's top-of-the-range facilities last month. All Blacks manager Darren Shand praised the high standard of the Sport Park, which played host to a morning training session to the world-renowned stars. The number one ranked side went on to beat Wales 33-10 in the Millennium Stadium clash, but manager Shand believes the key to their success is down to the hours of hard work put in by Captain Richie McCaw and co. Speaking exclusively to GlamSport, Shand - who took over the role as All Black manager in 2004 - said: "We are constantly trying to improve, that's part of the All Blacks history and legacy. "You can never have the perfect game, and that is what pushes us on, trying to reach that high benchmark that we have set ourselves. "We strive to constantly improve, and that can only be achieved by training hard." It's not the first time New Zealand have used the university's facilities, returning two years on from their last clash with Wales, the world's number one side took advantage of the indoor facilities to practice their line-out drills. Though the training session did come at a cost, with Fly-Half Dan Carter picking up an Achilles injury during the 20 minute session, meaning he missed out on the chance to face the 2013 Six Nations winners. Despite this, Shand was full of praise

for the Glamorgan Sport Park facilities, and in particular the 3G all-weather pitch. "The sports hall and high performance areas here are great," Shand said. "We've had some bad weather, but a lot of work has obviously gone into these pitches with regards to drainage and so on, so that has made a big difference for us. "The 3G pitches here are great for us because they are as close as we are going to get to the perfect surface. We don't mind making the short drive down here from Cardiff when we have facilities such as these available to us." During the All Blacks visit to Wales, team Media Manager, Joe Locke, also dropped by to chat to journalism students where he discussed the importance of a strong relationship between the players, media and the public. Talking of the guest lecture held by Locke, a spokesman from the University's public affairs and communication team, said: "We've hosted the All Blacks for their training through the week, and today's session was a tremendous bonus for our journalism students. "The University tries to prepare our students for a career by giving them an insight into the media as it really is, both through work placements and discussion with the experts who do these demanding jobs in the real world. "Joe's insight as the lead media handler for the World Cup winners has given the students a great window into the finely balanced relationship between journalists and the communications professionals whose job it is to work with them.

## ACE scheme all set for expansion



Glamorgan students take part in Atomic Touch Rugby (Photos: Luke Canton)



**H**UGE demand by students has led to a scheme set up by the University of Glamorgan, branching out into the local community. Active Community Enterprise Sports (ACE) was set up by four students last July, in partnership with Sport Wales and Sport Rhondda Cynon Taff (RCT), to help get more people to participate in sport. The £12,000 Sport Wales funded ACE scheme has so far attracted many students to take part in events such as Ultimate Frisbee and Atomic Touch - a sport that originates from New Zealand and takes inspiration from rugby. Luke Canton, Community Officer for ACE, reckons the scheme has plenty on offer for anyone to get involved in, and hopes that even more students take part in order to fulfil a more active lifestyle. Talking to GlamSport, he said: "On a weekly basis we run ACE Play on Tuesdays, which includes football on the 3G pitches and also run a Play session on Fridays which includes some non-traditional sports, such as 'Ultimate Frisbee' 'Atomic Touch' and volleyball. "We also have Ace Run on Tuesday and Thursday evenings - on the Tuesday we tend to have beginner sessions with flat roads,

whereas Thursday's are more intermediate with more sprinting and endurance work, running up the hills and surrounding areas. "There are obviously health benefits for those taking part in the sports and associated social benefits, bringing people together - so we would love it if we could keep the participation numbers at a high level. "We don't actually charge to play at the moment and run free transport to and from Glamorgan Sport Park. So we're doing our all to help students take part, and they can then take the benefits from this." Despite the enthusiasm shown, Canton believes the scheme needs to continue to improve in order to maintain participation numbers, with ACE already in the process of introducing more activities into the wider community. "We managed to receive around £12,000 funding, but we're at the stage where they want to start seeing some results now," he said. "Obviously we need to make sure that the participation numbers are up, so that when it comes around to providing the results we can show the positive effects it is having. "We are hoping to actually get out into the community after Christmas with a couple of projects in mind, such as local football busi-

ness league with all the guys from the nearby estate coming down to play - so we are really trying to get the community involved. "We are also planning ACE walk and ACE cycle sessions, which is mainly for the older generations because we don't expect many students to come along, but we'll go down our usual promotion route to try and get the word out. "It's all stuff that is popular at the moment, and in fact looking at all the data from Sports Wales, walking is the number one recreational activity by almost 20%, and cycling is obviously massive at the moment on the back of the Olympics and Tour De France, so this combined with where we are located means these events can hopefully really take off." ACE offers something different to a lot of the other sports schemes in the university, something Canton feels will help to attract more students to the community enterprise, which will help students in more ways than one. "Our ethos is to try and get as many people involved in sport and physical activity as possible, without having the usual constraints in terms of paying and travelling to the venues and also pushing the non-traditional sports - something different. We encourage all students to give it a go."

## Globetrotters bounce into Wales

**G**LOBAL superstars' The Harlem Globetrotters bounced into Trelai Primary School in Ely, Cardiff, last month - showing off their slam dunking skills to young fans. Children came to see two of the teams greatest members - female player Ariel 'Mighty' Mitchell and the more experienced 'Slick Willie'. The pupils were taught trademark Globetrotter tricks and spins as well as the ABCs of bullying prevention. Talking of the event, Slick Willie said:

"The kids listen and you get to talk to them. A stands for action, B stands for bravery and C stands for compassion. All kids know their ABCs, so by remembering those three simple letters and words and what they mean, they can help stop bullying in their school yards and in their communities." The Globetrotters designed the programme in coordination with the National Campaign to Stop Violence (NCSV). It targets 6-12 year-old pupils and involves discussing the three key

words and tools that children can use on a daily basis to reduce bullying. Basketball legends' The Globetrotters equate what it means to be part of a team and how kids can offer support to one another to help stop bullying. The message of bullying and violence prevention was taught with student participation - and the team's signature ball handling skills - for a well-balanced programme that informed, educated and entertained all those involved, in order to prevent bullying.



## Glamorgan get green light to launch new Gaelic football side this year

**G**AELIC football is set to receive a major boost after current and former students joined together to launch a new team.

Glamorgan do not currently have a Gaelic football side, despite the fact it is one of the most watched sports in Ireland.

The lack of attention in Britain is not enough to stop a group of students who are looking to set-up a team to contest in next seasons BUCS division.

Vice President Student Support Officer, Sarah Valkenborghs, 21, is hoping to make the most of the vast amount of Irish students

studying in Glamorgan to help create a Gaelic football side – a sport which is heavily contested back in her homeland of Ireland.

Valkenborghs believes that the sport, which is a mix between association football and rugby, can thrive, it's just a case of getting the players together, she said: "There are a lot of Irish people at the University of Glamorgan and back home in Ireland Gaelic football is the biggest sport - It's something that is central to the culture."

"I looked up the amount of Irish people in the uni and it turned out there was around 300 students from Ireland who are studying here and in surrounding areas, so I felt there had to be at least 15 students who were interested in creating this Gaelic football side – It is such a big sport back home after all. "Glamorgan did actually used to have

a Gaelic football side that were in fact really good, winning the cup and league on separate occasions, hopefully we can get back to a similar level one day"

The former volleyball player of three years believes that the interest is definitely there, and with the help of surrounding universities, the sport can really take off.

"Two years ago a student from Cardiff Met tried to set up a side, but found that there weren't enough players from that university alone.

"He asked some of the universities close by to advertise the team and work together to create a combined team.

"We went ahead and set up this joint side, and there was a lot of uptake from students at Glamorgan – even those who weren't actually Irish – which was promising.

"We had rugby players who were interested in giving it a try, they would go for a few weeks but because the training fields were so far away and hard to get to, they would stop coming after a few weeks because it simply wasn't worth the hassle.

"The interest was definitely there, but it was too inaccessible for the Glamorgan students."

This early interest in the team has left Valkenborghs with the bare bones of a squad, but she is hopeful that by this time next year Glamorgan will have a squad ready to compete in the BUCS league.



## Gough remains positive despite bad start

**FOOTBALL** Head Coach David Gough is hoping to take inspiration from his sides strong finish to last season after a disappointing start this time around, as the driving force to kick start the teams campaign.

Gough has seen his Glamorgan men's 2nd team lose their opening three games, conceding 10 goals in the process, but he is refusing to give up and believes that as soon as his side's luck changes, results will follow.

Speaking after Glamorgan's 2-0 home loss to Hartpury, Gough said: "It's been a disappointing start and we would have liked to have done better after the first three games, of course.

"Last year we finished runners-up in the league but we didn't take any points from the first two games, which was the same as this season coming into the Hartpury match where we were looking for a minimum of one point.

"Looking back at the early season

so far, there are always things you think you could have done differently."

Glamorgan showed a real togetherness and fighting spirit in the defeat to Hartpury, but they failed to hold on for a point and conceded twice late on to goals from Scott Wilson and Dan Culley.

The defeat came just a week after Glam fell to a 4-3 loss at Glamorgan Sport Park where they let slip a 1-0 lead before finding themselves 4-1 behind.

But despite the early setback, Gough is hoping to use video analysis to help guide his side as they push on, starting with the game against Swansea.

"I'm proud of my players, who have shown great spirit. We had conceded eight goals in our last two games and today came up against Hartpury who are one of the best sides in University history.

"It just hasn't happened for us so far, but we've got Swansea coming up - a derby game which becomes

"We are not looking at getting into a competitive league at this moment in time, it's a case of registering as a club for the time being.

"Although there is a BUCS league around, we missed entry to join due to a lack of players at the time. So this year we will set it up, before looking ahead to next year's Fresher's Week where we will have a stall to really push it and hopefully get into the league system."

For the time being, the Treforest based graduate is focusing on building the team to enter certain one off events, but is also still looking for more players.

"We can still enter one off competitions at the moment, but obviously we would really like to get the squad available to compete in the BUCS league.

"There are local teams in the area away from the uni who are trying to recruit students to play, so we will look into that.

"If there's anyone interested – whether they have experience or not – come and have a go. There's nothing to lose by giving it a go and it can be really fun.

"We've only had a few meetings and this week had a training session, so people who come along now don't need to worry about having missed anything.

"It's simple enough to pick up, and it really can provide you with some great fun"

It is the start of a process that the current students setting up this Gaelic football team hope will continue down the years, but for now it is a case of simply getting a team in place, before pushing on in the future.

the biggest game of our season.

"We have every game videoed so we can then analyse it afterwards, before coming together as a team on Friday mornings and going over it to see where we can perhaps improve."

Despite this, the Football & Performance Coach knows that results are all that matter, but with time and lessons being learned, Glamorgan can continue the hard work put in by previous management.

He said: "Football is played on the pitch and I couldn't have asked for any more from my team so far.

"We've been unlucky at certain times and not always taken our chances, but we've seen from Hartpury that the best teams get in front and keep the lead.

"We are in the top 10 university sides in the UK, so manager Steve Savage deserves massive credit for that and it's now our job as management staff to keep this good work going."

## 'Glamingsos' flying high

**G**lamorgan's water polo team travelled to Gloucestershire last month looking to secure promotion to Division 2 and a spot in this year's BUCS finals.

The thirteen man squad went into the final weekend of group matches on the back of three straight victories, beating Bath, University College of Plymouth and University of Gloucestershire on their way to the top the table.

However, with Aberystwyth and UWE also both winning their opening two games convincingly, all was to play for going into the final set of matches in Gloucestershire.

Glamorgan Flamingos opened against Aberystwyth with a shaky start. Sam Legge, who usually plays as a goalkeeper, saw himself receiving two major fouls within the first 48 seconds. This left the Flamingos open at the back, playing one minute with a man down.

Aberystwyth however could find no way through Evan Williams in goal, who recovered the ball and released Filippo Varatta for a counter attack which he converted.

Williams continued his fine goalkeeping prowess with a number of top saves, allowing team Captain, Graham Harrington, the freedom to concentrate more on attack. A gamble that paid off, with Harrington netting eight goals in Glam's eventual 14-3 victory. Other goals were scored by Varatta (2), Greenfield, Howells, Jones and Legge.

UWE also went on to beat Aberystwyth and Gloucestershire meaning that the final game of the day between the Glamorgan Flamingos and UWE was crucial. Both teams had already confirmed their spots in the semi finals of the competition, held in Bristol, by finishing in the top two places within the group, however both were looking to finish first and gain promotion to Division 2 for the start of next season.

Tom Howells opened the scoring for the Flamingos after a minute and a half. Despite this, some sloppy and confused defending

from the Glamorgan defence saw UWE lead 1-2 quickly after. However, Glam's never say die attitude that had seen them win in their opening four games kicked in. Cue National swimmer, Tom Greenfield, scored a superb solo goal. Picking the ball up on five metres, Greenfield managed to swim past four defenders and round the goalkeeper with a clever piece of individual skill to place the ball in the opposition's net, levelling the score at 2-2.

The match looked settled to succumb to stalemate with each team scoring goals at either end. Howells and Harrington added one more each to their tally with Legge picking up two long range efforts making the score 6-6 going into the final quarter. Welsh squad member Howells made the score 7-6 two minutes into the final quarter, ensuring that Glamorgan would go into the lead for only the first time in the game since he opened the score in the first two minutes. Varatta then cemented the result with a fantastic long range shot that UWE's goalkeeper was unable to reach. Howells rounded off the score with a clever one-two with Legge before converting at the near post to seal the game with only 20 seconds left to play. Final score: 9-6.

Captain Harrington said after the game how proud he was of the team, saying: "The fact that six different people scored goals in each game is a true testament to our depth of squad, team ethos and character.

"Many of the lads hadn't played water polo before we set up this team last term, so to gain promotion and reach the final in our first year with the facilities we have on offer is superb."

Glamorgan's success tops a fantastic year for Welsh water polo, with Cardiff based Harrington and Legge helping club side Welsh Wanderers to promotion back to the top flight of the British National Water Polo league earlier this year, to go alongside their success with Glamorgan.

For more water polo action, turn to 'In Focus'

## Cheerleading joy for Glamorgan Coyotes



**UNIVERSITY** of Glamorgan's cheerleading team came home with two trophies after competing at their first competition of the season.

The Glamorgan Coyotes entered four different teams to British Cheerleading Association's Western Classic at Cheltenham Racecourse and returned with a second and fourth trophy.

A group of 31 cheerleaders made up the Glamorgan teams for Cheerleading Level three co-ed, pom dance, and two group stunt squads - all girl level three and co-ed level four.

All teams went up against each other during the competition, made up mainly of universities based in the south of England and Wales.

Talking about the event, Jo Doherty, the cheerleading captain, said: "I was really happy with the results and how the competition went - everyone really enjoyed themselves.

"Coming home with two trophies at our first competition is a great achievement with it being some of the girls first ever competition.

"All of the routines went well, everyone tried their hardest, and the pom dance looked amazing."

The teams are now looking forward to their next competitions - BCA University Competition and BCA Nationals - at the end of June in Telford.

Doherty said: "We have seen the standard of other teams so have added harder stunts to place higher in our next competitions.

"All of the new girls have worked so well, we have never had a level three team with new members in it."

Cheerleading competitions involve different teams performing a routine made up of jumps, stunts, tumble and dance. Divisions are separated depending on age (anyone from four upwards can compete), difficulty (level one is the easiest and level six is the hardest) and whether the team is all-girl or co-ed - a mixture of boys and girls.

The routines are marked by judges with the highest score winning.



The Glamorgan Flamingos ahead of their clash with Gloucestershire

Glamingsos words: Sam Legge

Cheerleading words: Lottie Walker

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Despite having 200 years of history between them, plans have gone ahead to merge Glamorgan and Newport to form a new 'super university' - though as *GlamSport* discovered, it's not all good news.

# The great divide

Photo: Ieuan Flowers  
Words: Dan Lewis

When news broke last year of a proposed merger which would see Glamorgan and Newport combine, it was brushed off by many as a late April Fools joke.

But with the move now all set to go ahead, Glamorgan students have hit out at the plans that will see the university's sports teams combined with Newport.

The merger – which will go ahead in September 2013 – is set to see the University of Glamorgan and University of Wales, Newport, come together to form a new 'super-university'.

As part of the merger plans, Glamorgan's 44 teams will combine with Newport's 11 to expand the sports sides, which has left mixed feelings among current sports players.

The general consensus among students is that the merger will have a negative effect on the current university teams, with Newport not being able to add anything to the current structure in a sporting sense.

Dai Nicholas, who studies Sports Science and Rugby, believes Glamorgan have worked too hard for a merger to go ahead, saying: "In terms of the sports sides, I don't

think we should merge the teams.

"Glamorgan have worked hard to get where they are as a team and as individuals. When you look at Newport in a sports sense, they are not going to bring anything to the table. It will also be hard to get to know the new players."

Director of Sport at the University of Glamorgan, Dr Tudor Williams, believes that it is important to keep the positive student experience at the heart of any major decisions.

He understands student's fears that a merged university could mean losing the key team spirit, as well as the extra travelling - these are all factors that will be taken into consideration.

"We have students based in Cathays and Treforest who travel to and from Glamorgan Sport Park to take part in weekly matches," Williams told *GlamSport*.

"Students studying at Newport will likewise travel from surrounding areas – so for me the main focus is to keep the student experience positive.

"If we have a student sport team playing at a certain level and they train either at Glamorgan Sport Park or Treforest and play on a Wednesday, it wouldn't make sense to me to

have a combined team who then have to travel to play their matches at Newport, and also the other way around.

"We must not underestimate the fact that all the student sports teams have a fantastic collective spirit. You want to represent your university no matter what the sport is.

"The distance between the two university campuses - particularly for training and matches - could affect the student experience if we are not careful.

"For example, we may have a team playing away at Aberystwyth on a Wednesday afternoon and if we had some students from Newport playing in the side they would then have to travel down to Treforest to get the bus up to Aberystwyth, before coming back to Treforest and then back to Newport again – these are the logistics we have to think about."

***We don't improve the competition***

A name for the new merged university was announced at the end of last year, with students having a say in the final naming of the new institution - The University of South Wales.

Though another concerned student, Aled Ball, believes that the

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merger can have a big effect on the quality of sport in the region, as well as some wider financial issues.

The third year Police Science student said: "I don't think Newport will bring anything to us, we'll have to bring new boys in and that will take a lot of time for them to gel, so it's not a good choice."

"I don't see the need to merge, everyone talks about making Welsh rugby stronger, but this merger can make the leagues less competitive."

"Our second and third teams can lose an opponent to play, and we'll have to travel further now that we aren't playing Newport in any leagues. This can affect travel expenses of course - we've got to look at this in the short and long term in terms of these decisions."

Glamorgan currently sit in 37th position in the British Universities & Colleges Sport (BUCS) overall standings, whereas Newport is much further down in 105th position.

Harry Hendricks, a current second year student at Glamorgan, shares the concerns of many students who believe the current level of sport at Newport can have an adverse effect on the university.

"I don't think it will improve the competition. When you look at the leagues, Newport's sides are quite far down," a concerned Hendricks said.

"So although you do improve the intake, it doesn't necessarily improve the level of competition."

But it is because of these concerns that Glamorgan look set to delay the full merging of the current Newport and Glamorgan sports

sides into one until September 2014.

Alex Kennedy, Glamorgan's Student Union Vice President of Student Activities, talked about the two options that the new university sport teams would be faced with.

He said: "We met with an executive from BUCS and she gave us two options. The first option would involve the university playing as one team.

"This means that players from Newport would have to travel to Treforest, Treforest to Newport and ATRiuM either way. So there are certainly some travel complications that could arise."

The former Glamorgan student also talked about how this option would be funded, adding: "The university has spoken to both unions and discussed that if this option went ahead, then both SU's would be responsible for how much money they would need to fund things such as travel expenses."

"I emailed the option list out to the different clubs in the university in Fresher's Week and I've had about 250 responses which have gone for option two."

Over the summer, Glamorgan invested over £300,000 on sports facilities, which included refurbishment work on certain areas, such as the main hall in Treforest.

The University of Glamorgan can boast having some of the finest facilities in the country, as seen when the All Blacks visited Glamorgan Sport Park in November to train ahead of their clash with Wales.

Jenny Fotheringham, a Masters student from Exeter, trusts that Glamorgan may be at a disadvantage with the new merger, she comments:

"I can certainly see more problems than opportunities."

"We are lucky here at Glamorgan because we have brilliant coaching staff, so that may be an advantage for

the Newport girls, but for us it's convenient to have our rugby here in Treforest."

Despite the fears aired by students, Dr Williams believes that by merging with Newport, both institutions can work hand-in-hand to provide top class facilities for all students, though it may come at a cost.

"Funding is of course key, we have great facilities at Glamorgan but likewise New-

port also boasts having some fantastic facilities they can use," Williams explained.

"This includes the Sports Centre which is only 10 years old, and they have very close links to things like the cycling velodrome and Celtic Manor resort from a golf point of view which is on the doorstep. University of Wales, Newport has a great golf programme also as part of the Ryder Cup legacy."

"For some of the more specialist areas such as cycling, students may then travel from one place to another to take advantage of what they have available to them."

"Between both institutions there are some great facilities, but my gut feeling at the moment is that students will want to stay reasonably local to where their teaching is and where their friends are for the sport."

#### *This will help the university*

Plans were abandoned last month to force a three-way merger with Cardiff Met – formerly UWIC – after the Cardiff based university was opposed to the idea.

The merger go ahead comes after the Welsh government led the drive to rearrange higher education in Wales to create a smaller number of larger universities.

Though despite the merger getting the green light, with no legal barriers in the way, Head of Sport, Williams, believes this news can really help Glamorgan in terms of achievements won.

"As far as success goes I believe this will really help us as a university," he said.

"Sport is buoyant at the moment. We have had an extra 14 sports teams entered this year and sport participation has increased as well as student memberships who are casually using us."

"We have entered partnerships with the Marriott hotel and Pure Gym, so on the back of London 2012 sport is at a high for not just the university but for Britain as a whole."

"What we need to do quickly is make sure the students are engaged with what is going on. We had our trials weekend recently where 790 students turned up and the whole point of these trials is to let students see what it is they are doing and what the brand is."

"The heart and the soul of the sports teams are in the club itself, whether the first team or the fifth team and it's important that they get the same opportunities right throughout this process."



Top: Glamorgan Sport Park and Newport velodrome; Above: The two uni's compete

# ADVERTISEMENT



# Meet the Scholars... Cathy Bastian



“The standard is very good here. The season has gone well for me so far, and we’ve got a great chance to pick up a trophy”

For first year student Cathy Bastian, life is going perfectly at the moment. On the back of a recent call-up by the Wales senior netball squad, the Maesteg based youngster has a spring in her step as she aims to achieve her target of becoming a teacher, as well as picking up more Welsh caps.

**B**alancing study with sport is never an easy task, but for Sport Scholar Cathy Bastian, it all seems to be adding up.

The University of Glamorgan’s Sport Scholarship programme was set up to allow students to excel in both their sporting and academic careers.

For 20-year-old Cathy, her aspirations of becoming a maths teacher are currently on hold as she attempts to pin down a place in the Wales netball senior side.

The Glamorgan student was selected as part of a travelling senior squad last year - a memorable experience she believes has helped her in the long-term.

Speaking to GlamSport, Cathy said: “A couple of us were selected to go with the senior squad in August. We didn’t get to play, but the experience was really good.

“Being in that environment to see how the seniors prepare for games was great and has certainly helped me.”

Despite not featuring for the senior side, the first year student has already picked up caps at three different age levels – though success has often been restricted to second place.

“I’ve played three matches in Netball Europe Open for the U-21 side and also have caps for the U-19s and U-17s as well.

“We place in silver a lot, with England always seeming to beat us.

“Though England are the top team in the UK and currently third in the world, so they are one of the best sides around.

“They’ve also just won a test series against Australia, which shows their strength.”

Ironically, it is thanks to this recent success of Wales’ arch rivals England that is seeing the often sparse coverage of the sport slowly improving.

England picked up a series win over a strong Australia side last month – their first ever series victory over the world number one ranked side.

Despite this win - which many claim is a defining moment for netball in Britain - it has still got some way to go before it receives similar coverage to the likes of football and rugby.

“It’s frustrating, because sport coverage is male dominant,” Cathy said.

“It’s certainly good that coverage is increasing at the moment, so the better England do in terms of winning compe-

titions, hopefully the better the coverage in Britain for the sport as a whole.

“I hope the recent success of England can improve the coverage the sport receives here in Britain. It’s been over the news the last month or so which it never really has been before, so that is really good.

“The sport is certainly pushing to receive more coverage.”

Turning attention back to Cathy’s own personal achievements, the Sports Scholar student believes that travelling to the Cook Islands with Wales at the back-end of last year has provided her with some invaluable experience.

The tri test series on the South Pacific Island saw Wales record a victory over Scotland as well as comfortably beating the host nation.

Talking of the tournament, Cathy said: “We managed to win gold in the competition. It was between us, Cook Islands and Scotland, and it was a great experience to travel across the world.

“I certainly took a lot away from the tournament such as learning to be more calm and preparing more for games.

“I also learned the importance of focusing on the basics, rather than playing ‘flash’ netball.

“It’s also important to work as a team, rather than as individuals.”

**If I continue to train hard and keep improving I will hopefully receive another Wales cap**

Ahead of her side’s cup quarter-final clash against Newport, Cathy – who favours playing as a Wing Attack - doesn’t believe it’s difficult to adapt back to life at Glamorgan.

She believes that the squad strength and qualities of team Captain Collette Johnson help the netball 1st team to push on for honours.

“It’s not really hard to adapt back to Glamorgan because we’ve got a really good team here,” she said.

“Collette is someone I’ve always known. She’s been a really good team player for us and has been great to work with.

“It’s really good having her as captain be-

cause she has also been a part of the Wales set-up, so she knows all about the commitments.

“The standard is also very good here, and the season has gone well for me so far. We’ve got a great chance to pick up a trophy and that would be really good.”

Turning attention towards the university’s top of the range facilities, Cathy reckons that if she continues to train hard, a senior Wales call-up could be on the cards.

Though despite this, the sport is not yet a full-time profession – something the Welsh player hopes will change soon.

“The facilities here at Glamorgan are brilliant. I’ve got a Sports Scholarship, so I can use the gym when I’m in university which is really beneficial because it means I can manage my time more efficiently.

“If I continue to train hard and keep improving my game then I will hopefully go on and get a senior Wales cap.

“I would love netball to be a professional sport in terms of playing full-time, but I don’t think that will ever be the case.

“It’s not a full time sport in the UK, whereas in New Zealand and Australia it is.

“It’s strange that netball isn’t played at the Olympics. I’m not sure why exactly, but hopefully that changes one day, and I certainly hope to continue playing for many more years to come.”

Though looking ahead to the future, Cathy hopes to become a maths teacher – using netball to her advantage to gain some key skills and friends for life.

“Netball has most certainly developed my confidence within myself, which is something I can use.

“I’ve also made some really good friends through playing the sport – there’s something about being part of a sports team that brings you closer together.

Cathy’s talents have certainly not gone unnoticed, with Sports Participation Manager Emma Bradshaw telling GlamSport: “Cathy’s experience and skill really enhances the team dynamics.

“When Cathy does play for Glamorgan it gives the team much more options and although she plays Centre, she is such a versatile player that she can slot in just about anywhere.

“She is a real asset to the 1st team squad.”



# Chris Pickard

## "I'm focusing on completing my degree before making my way back into the Welsh squad"

Balancing sport with study is never an easy task, though as student Chris Pickard has shown, with some commitment success can be achieved.

Picking up his first cap for the Welsh badminton team at the age of 15, it's fair to say that Pickard hasn't looked back. With further caps for the senior side to go alongside victories in the Junior National Championship and Senior National Championships – a competition he won in February this year after numerous near-attempts – Pickard has managed to build on his early career success.

Though the Welsh U19 singles, doubles and mixed doubles champion had to make a tough choice between study and sport, opting to balance the two with a particular focus on his master's degree which is now coming to an end.

As victory earlier this year in the Senior Championship shows however, Pickard still has the hunger to succeed in the sport alongside his study.

"Winning the Senior Championship was great, especially because I wasn't really expected to win it," Pickard tells GlamSport.

"I just couldn't seem to win it in the past. I won the Junior Championships for four years running, but always missed out when it came to senior level – until this year.

"Obviously there are players who are a lot older than me playing in the competition, so over time I built up my experience before finally winning the trophy which was a really good feeling."

Pickard's route into the sport was rather unusual, though it's fair to say he has not looked back, despite his master's degree in computer forensics now taking immediate priority – an area he would love to one day work in.

"My cousin invited me to a local badminton club when I was younger and as I had nothing else to do I went along. I started going every week then before getting scouted for a county squad, and I then got better and better.

"I got into the Welsh squad when I was 15 and represented Wales from then on really, picking up my first senior cap when I was 19. I was junior national champions between the ages of 15–19, which was a great achievement.

"Badminton has taken a back seat of late as I've been focusing on my master's degree, but once that is out of the way I would like to get back into the sport.

"I originally actually studied sports science at Cardiff Met, but it was too much of the same thing so by studying comput-

er forensics it kept my study separate from badminton which meant it was fresher.

"I've put my studies first, but now that is coming to an end I can get back into training and get playing for Wales again.

"I love computer forensics and it is an area I would love to go into in the future, but of course I am also focused on the badminton side of things."

Despite the individual accolades picked up over the years by Pickard, it has not been a season to remember for Glamorgan's badminton side with a bottom placed finish.

Pickard puts this down to certain key players moving on, though he is keen to use his experience in the sport to push on fellow students in order to help get Glamorgan climb the tables in future seasons.

"Glamorgan haven't done very well this year," Pickard continued.

"It's a shame really because a few years ago we were in the Premier Division, but a lot of the players left so this year we've been struggling, simply because we haven't had the same number of players.

"I've been coaching players to help bring them on a bit, and I'm hoping to stay involved next year - as long as I have a job around here. I want to still have something to do with this project, because there are some players who can be really good."

Using his experience to push on others in the sport is something that Pickard would like to do more of in the future, though right now he is focused on the playing side of things, with forensics very much still on his mind.

Picking up more caps for Wales upon the end of his master's degree

is Pickard's key priority, with plans already in place to allow his transition back into the Welsh playing system.

"I really enjoy the coaching side of Badminton, but I need to get some more qualifications in that area really.

"Coaching is something I've always been involved with – I used to coach the disabled badminton team, so I do enjoy it, but at the moment I want to just focus on the playing side rather than the coaching.

"I left the Welsh squad because of university. I was having to do too much really, so that has meant I've been pretty much training by myself. I have however spoken to those who run the Welsh set-up and hopefully after the summer they can integrate me back into the system once all my work is out of the way.

"I'm focusing on completing my degree before eventually making my way back into the Welsh squad where I hope to win as many caps as I possibly can and represent Wales, before giving back to the sport through coaching.

"At the same time I would like to keep my career in forensics open, because it is something I really enjoy doing."

Despite representing Wales in numerous ranked tournaments around the world, Pickard's ranking has understandably fallen of late as his focus has moved towards his degree. Though he is hoping that with attention turning back to badminton after his studies, he can climb back up the rankings before challenging for a 2018 Commonwealth Games spot.

"I'm a bit too late for the Commonwealth Games as you have to be in the

top 60 in the world to get picked so that's pretty much out of the question now," said a realistic Pickard.

"Because I've been focusing on university work I haven't been going to the tournaments to pick my ranking up which is a shame – but I am certainly looking ahead to the next Commonwealth Games in

five years time, that would be a special achievement."

A special achievement it certainly would be; Pickard has the highly regarded tournament right in his sights

– this time it will have his full attention with his studies almost out of the way.

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# Glamorgan making waves in the pool

With promotion secured and a cup final to look forward to, it would be easy to mistake Glamorgan's water polo team as an established squad – though just 12 months ago this water polo side didn't even exist...and nine of the players had never played before.

Just a year into their existence, Glamorgan's water polo side are looking to round off a promotion winning season in style when they face Dundee in next month's cup final.

With promotion to the second tier secured, all attention now turns to the Shield Final where Glamorgan will come up against a tough University of Dundee side who, like Glam, won all three games in the league to reach the final of the competition.

With all the success, it would be easy to mistake this Glamorgan team as an established outfit, yet just 12 months ago this side didn't even exist.

"The team was actually entered before we got the players in place," one of the side's star players, Tom Greenfield, tells GlamSport. "Captain Graham Harrington got a Sports Scholarship, and [Head of Sport] Tudor Williams felt it would only be right to then help set up a team,

before getting the right numbers to compete."

It's certainly been a season to remember for the men's water polo side, though as Greenfield tells us inside the £32 million Cardiff International Pool – the side's current training base – recruitment for players is not easy, though recent success will certainly help.

"Often I'll say to people, 'why don't you join the team,' and they didn't even know we had one - so it's a case of getting others aware of it. Though we train out in Cardiff Bay and Llantrisant, which isn't exactly local which doesn't help us.

"We got a mention at the recent sports' award night, where we were nominated for the best team award – it was nice to get recognised for this, which can again help with getting others to join in. That's the key now to try and get more players into the system to build on our success."

Greenfield represented Great Britain in swimming last year in the European Short Course Championships in Poland, as well as the European Grand Prix in Holland and Belgium which he puts down to "a lot of hard work which paid off in the end."

The third year chiropractic studies student – who picked up a silver medal in the Senior British Nationals with a personal best time – played a big part in helping Glam establish themselves in the sport, alongside Graham Harrington, who took up the role of captain.

Harrington, who has also represented GB in his sport, reckons that Dundee will provide Glam with a tough test in the final, something which hasn't been the case so far for these BUCS debutants.

"UWE were the only side to come within two goals of us, all other games have no necessarily been a walk-over, but

have been fairly comfortable," he said.

"As of yet in the cup we haven't really had push on to win games, we've been relatively comfortable, but we're expecting it to be a different matter when we face Dundee. Cup finals are a one off, so all form goes out of the window.

"We had the Celtic tri-nations event down here last month, and three of the Scottish team were from Dundee, which includes their best player and two of the bench players – man for man it is going to be a close contest."

**The standard is stronger than expected**

Despite having the chance to win the league and cup double when they face Dundee, Harrington is keeping his feet firmly on the ground and already preparing for what will be a tough campaign next season – where the standard will be as high as ever.

"We've already advertised to get more people to participate next year, where we can hopefully get a second men's side, and a women's team going.

"We've done great this year, especially considering it's our first season. There are a few of us who have played water polo before this year, but for nine others this was their first time playing, so to get that top spot is a brilliant achievement, and we'll have to now build on that next time around.

"The standard of water polo is stronger than expected at university level. You'd expect the standard to perhaps be a step down, but even in the top leagues there is varying levels – you have players who have played in the National League, Division 1 and Di-

vision 2, and then some players who haven't reached that level. Overall the standard is relatively strong at university level.

"Any newly promoted side will be looking to consolidate in their new division, but like with any uni sport, there will usually be a large turnover of players who are leaving – fortunately we are only going to lose one player at the end of this season, so hopefully we can press on next year."

Despite having the ability to succeed even further in the sport, Harrington is firmly focusing on his history degree, believing that the gruelling training schedule – which was put in place in January – actually helps with his studies.

"Realistically water polo is never going to be a huge sport in this country," he continued.

"History is something I have always enjoyed doing, so I would like to carry on with it, get a degree and see where things end up.

"Training provides me with a nice break from uni work. I've always found that these sessions – whether it's an hour or two hours – will help to freshen me up to allow myself to push on with work afterwards."

Harrington shares the views of teammate Greenfield in terms of player recruitment, where the side will need to push on following their recent success in the sport, despite coming into the current season simply looking to gain experience.

"It was surprising to have been as successful as we have been this year, because so many of our players were new to the sport. Our main target coming into the season was to basically make sure everyone

knew the rules and gained some experience before pushing on next time around.

"It's a popular enough sport. A lot of my friends were interested in it when I told them about it, so it's a case of getting others down here and watching it and being aware of it.

"Water polo is a great sport to play, and is obviously really good for you in terms of fitness. There's also that team element as well that swimming alone won't give you. We've got a tight-knit group here, but we're happy to take on new players in the future should they wish to join us."

**The sport is struggling in terms of finance**

Following the London Olympics last summer, coverage of the sport – which dates back to the 1900 Olympic Games – began to increase, though it is still lacking in mainstream media exposure, which Harrington reckons could be down to wider issues such as funding.

"Coverage of the sport increased around the time of the Olympics, but that was the same with all sports. In the build up to the London Games, Sky Sports put together a highlights show which helped to improve the coverage, but it is still nowhere near the level which it should be at.

"The sport is struggling in terms of funding so it's difficult to get others taking part at grass roots level, but as this university team has shown there is interest there."

Though funding may be a key factor in whether the sport pushes on in the future, Glamorgan have this year shown that with the right attitude to succeed, anything is possible.



**"For nine of our players, this was their first time playing, so to get that top spot really is a brilliant achievement"**



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“We’ve shown great **team spirit** throughout

and **battled** to stay in the division”



**Following on from their dramatic final day survival against arch rivals Swansea, Glamorgan manager Steve Savage sat down with *GlamSport* to have a look back at another rollercoaster ride for the men’s 1st team squad.**

**I**t was a true underdog story. The side with limited funds, a small squad and relying on dropouts from the nearby football academy - but Glamorgan’s 1st team managed to avoid relegation in the most dramatic fashion against all the odds.

A terrible start to the season left many expecting the worst, but with true grit and determination, Glam avoided the drop with a final day victory against bitter enemies Swansea to secure a third season in the top Division.

Any lingering hopes of a strong campaign were put into context when the season began in the worst possible way for Steve Savage’s men.

An opening day defeat at the hands of Chichester was followed up with losses at Bath in a seven goal thriller, and a morale-crushing 2-0 home loss to Severnside rivals University of the West of England (UWE).

Things did start to turn in November however, with what would turn out to be a huge victory at Welsh rivals Swansea, before a narrow victory at Glamorgan Sport Park against Brighton led to Glam climbing away from the relegation zone.

Savage – who balances his time between managing the Glamorgan 1st team and the Welsh university side – puts the bad start to the season down to the fact that so many new players had come into the squad, with just a matter of days before the season kicked-off.

In his honest and frank interview, Savage began by saying: “Coming into the season we were purely trying to stay in the Premier League, which is the top division in the country. There are only six teams in it and two of those sides get relegated, so it is always going to be tough.

“It obviously wasn’t the best of starts, but it was always going to be difficult with the turnaround we had from the trials and selection of our first squad to our first game which was only 10 days apart.

“It is always difficult when you don’t know who is coming into the side in terms of replacing players in certain areas.

“We lost eight of our starting 11 from the previous season, so from the outset we knew it would be a challenge and that we would have to give time to allow the side to gel and for us to get our message across to them.

“When the group did click together then we started putting some results together.”

Following a positive run of form through November with those victories against Swansea and Brighton, the

*Continues on next page...*



men's 1st team failed to build any real momentum, crashing to Chichester and Bath in successive weeks by the same 2-1 scoreline.

### The Swansea victory is a highlight

The Chichester game in particular was a bitter pill to swallow for the Blue and Yellows who fell to a late Sam Goodge winner, before he was later sent off. It was a contest which saw Glamorgan fail to capitalise on their opportunities – something which Savage believes could have cost them dear at the end of the season.

“Stats show that we have dominated a lot of games this season, but have failed to win. I was left thinking that if we had taken our chances in more games this season then we would have gained some extra points along the way.”

As for points gained, the away trip to Hartpury at the three-quarter-stage of the season that Glam faced whilst low on confidence, turned out to be a personal highlight for manager Savage, who saw his side come back across the Severn Bridge with a hard fought point.

Despite this unexpected draw, the well regarded manager believes his side could have come away with more, saying: “In terms of team performance that was a personal highlight against a very good Hartpury side who go out and recruit ex-professionals or budding future football stars.”

“To pull off a draw was a huge achievement. We took the lead and could have and probably should have won the game, not many sides have taken points off Hartpury so that was great.”

Glamorgan would have two months over the Christmas and New Year period to reflect on the season so far, but any hopes of avoiding a final day relegation fight were quashed by a Brighton side vying for revenge.

At the Falmer Campus in Brighton, Glam would fall to a 2-1 defeat meaning that with just one match remaining they were staring relegation right in the face.

Swansea on the other hand had two matches – home to Champions elect Hartpury and away at lowly Bath - to leave Glamorgan in real trouble and confine them to their worst fears of relegation, but the Swans failed to pick up

a victory in both matches, meaning we would have a final day relegation battle on our hands.

“In terms of the South Wales derby it was a big game for us – an all or nothing clash where the winner would stay up,” Savage said.

“Swansea only needed a point, but we put a huge emphasis onto the players to deliver and we managed to take that into the game and take our chances when they come.

“You can't afford to lose too many games on the bounce and you certainly need to win a minimum of three or four games – so to stay in this division was our main aim and we achieved that with a victory here.

“We have shown great team spirit throughout and battled to stay in the league.”

It was built up as being a close fought and fiery affair, but in truth Glamorgan eased any nerves early on thanks to striker Sam Bailey's early goal, before three goals inside the opening 10 minutes of the second half sealed Glam's place in the division for another season.

“I mentioned that from a performance point of view the Hartpury away game was a highlight, but the overall highlight has to be this 5-0 victory because it was down to the players to decide where they wanted to play next season - League 1 or the Prem - and they went and delivered.”

Though in what many ways can encapsulate the entire season, Glamorgan failed to build on their final day survival, by crashing out in the cup the following week at the first hurdle.

Visitors Northumbria ran out 6-0 winners in a one-sided affair that ended the season on a low note for the Prem survivors. Despite this, Savage believes his players can be extremely proud of themselves following a big team effort, which culminated in some of those who haven't had so much game time this season featuring in the cup defeat to the Northumbria.

He said: “The Northumbria game was a tough one for us. We took the decision to play our some squad players, taking four players that would normally start, out of the side. This included our holding midfielder and goalkeeper as well as some other midfielders.

“Because our squad wasn't always the strongest, these players were always going



Above: Glamorgan players square off against Hartpury in a dramatic 2-1 home loss for Savage's men

to be challenging, and this competition was a chance for those who have been loyal to us and trained every week to get their chance.”

“We always said the league was our main priority, so this competition gave some of the other players a chance of playing.”

During his interview with GlamSport, ‘Sav’, as he is affectionately referred to by his players, also pointed to the importance of the links the university has in place with Cardiff City, or more specifically, the Championship sides academy, which is based at Glamorgan's Treforest home.

Referring to the state-of-the-art facilities,

Savage said: “We have a good partnership in place so we do try to pick up those players who have been released by the academy. If they have been through the Cardiff City academy at the ages of 16-18 then they are technically good players, it is then a case of getting them to step up to men's football at the older age level.

“Mama [Mamadou Diallo] and Luke Jones were good academy players for us to pick up and they have added to our squad – that goes to show the benefit of having these strong links in place.”

### We will always struggle to survive

Despite these football connections, Savage still laid bare the challenges facing his Glamorgan side, who don't receive the same funding as some of the larger sporting universities, such as South Division Prem champs Hartpury.

“The reality is, without the top players – and we don't recruit football players, we rely on students coming through the doors from all over – we will always struggle. But overall it was a good season and a huge tribute to the university to survive.

“I was realistic in the sense that I felt with this squad of players we would struggle, so to get that win against Swansea on the final day and cross the finish line was crucial – relief more than joy because it has been a tough season.”

Savage also picked out his personal player of the season, Chris Metihke, though he stressed the importance of the entire squad, who gave their all throughout.

“My personal player of the season would be

Chris Metihke, who scored three against Bath when we lost 4-3. He started and played in all of our league games, and in terms of consistency he was always a threat and also worked hard to track back with his defensive duties.

“I felt he was one of the outstanding players for us, but all of the lads did a good job and it was a real team effort, rather than an individual effort. That is probably why we struggled in some games because we didn't have enough individual stand-out performances.”

Finally, attention turned to next season, where Sav and his players embark on another season in the Prem South following their dramatic survival – hoping to now challenge some of the bigger sides.

“We are hoping to push on next season. We've had a few years in the Prem so it will still be tough to survive, but we will look to target footballers now with the links that we have with Welsh football clubs and the Cardiff City academy, and try to target specific players to come in and have a real go at it.

“The league is too easy for Hartpury in my opinion - they have it their own way every year, so I would like to have a real go at them next year. We picked up a point away at Hartpury this season, so we are not a million miles away - it is just a case of one or two very good footballers coming through the Glamorgan doors.”

And with that Glamorgan close the book on another challenging, but overall successful season. They will now hope to write an even more memorable chapter in October when they do it all over again.

### Glam hit for six after suffering survival hangover

A WEEK on from their triumphant final day survival victory over Swansea, Glamorgan fell at the first hurdle in the BUCS MARS Championship – losing 6-0 to Northumbria.

Despite coming into the match on a high following the 5-0 crushing of Swansea, Glam failed to get any sort of grip on the contest, with Northumbria cruising into the quarter-finals where they will face Northern Division champions – and cup favourites - Loughborough.

The mood was altogether different for a Northumbria side that had made the near 11 hour-round-journey from Newcastle, following the side's relegation from their respective division in February. But coming into the game with just one loss in their last five, it was clear to see that the Newcastle based side were certainly no pushovers.

It was also clear to see from kick off that Northumbria intended to use this end of season cup competition to rectify what has been a largely poor season on the field, by making it as far as possible. With just six minutes on the clock, centre back Will Lencham fired the away side into the lead, and from this point on they didn't look back.

Northumbria had a chance to extend their lead just minutes later with quick-fire chances – the first falling to goalscorer Lencham in the box, before Dan Riley saw his goal-bound effort saved low down by Daniel Bevan in goal, who was filling in for the rested Mike Lewis.

For a twenty minute spell after this early Northumbria pressure, the game was fairly even, with both sides creating opportunities. Northumbria will argue that they had the better of the chances however, with a free-kick on the edge of the box ruffling the top of the net, before Riley had a second chance to get his name on the score-sheet.

Then, with just over 30 minutes of the game played came a moment of magic to really liven up this game on a cold, damp, February afternoon at Glamorgan Sport Park. Midfielder Tom Davies spotted stand-in 'keeper Bevan off his line, before lofting in a shot from just inside his own area which floated majestically over Bevan's head into the Glam goal.

If this wasn't bad enough for the Blue & Yellows, then things were about to get a lot worse. Riley made up for his earlier misses by scoring an overhead kick following a corner which hadn't been dealt with. It was now 0-3 and the game was all-but-over before the interval.

Goals from Bean Sears and Mike Byram followed in the second half to condemn Glam to a heavy defeat at Glamorgan Sport Park.

## Glamorgan come out on top in battle to avoid relegation

GLAMORGAN have retained their place in the Premier South division following an emphatic final day 5-0 victory over rivals Swansea - in a contest where the loser would be relegated.

The match was expected to be a tight-fought encounter, with Glamorgan knowing that anything less than three points would see a season of ups and downs end with the university's top side facing life in the second-tier next season.

Though an early goal from striker Sam Bailey quickly helped settle any nerves, before three goals inside the opening 10 minutes of the second half helped to seal Glam's place in the division for another season.

In what had been a bad week for

Swansea with a heavy defeat at home to league champions Hartpury, followed by a loss away at Bath last time out, the away side knew that a point would still be enough to secure their fate - keeping them in the division at Glamorgan's expense.

Despite this, things couldn't have started much worse for the visitor's as Bailey found time to compose himself inside the box with just over three minutes played, and fired away an effort into the roof of the net to give Glamorgan a dream start.

The team spirit – which has been clear to see all season – was highlighted in the early celebrations, though Glam knew that a Swansea equaliser would change matters altogether.

Swansea didn't let the early goal

faze them, though their best chances came about through set-pieces – the best of which a corner which wasn't dealt with, leading to Mike Lewis being called into action. The Glam number one got down low to stop a goal-bound effort with his feet, restricting Swansea to nothing more than half-chances.

The Swans tried their best to turn the match back into a contest, but the closest they came to pulling back a goal came after an hour as a miss-hit cross from wide looked to be dipping under Lewis' crossbar, though the Glam 'keeper managed to handle the 'shot-cross' well.

Glam did however build on their early lead with goals from Meithike (2) and Cardiff City prospect Dean Hudson Hudson



Photo: James Edwards  
Words: Dan Lewis



## On the road to success...

***Seven years after taking the reigns at Glamorgan, volleyball coach Carl Harwood is calling time on his career. With many lows, as well as the recent highs, Harwood bows out after Glam's most successful ever year in the sport. Dan Lewis explores the sides' secret to success, and looks at what is next for the newly-revamped teams...***

**W**hen Carl Harwood took up the opportunity to coach the university's volleyball sides, it was a case of getting Glamorgan in a position where they could compete with the best – seven years on and that mission looks to have been surpassed.

With the men's 1st team winning the BUCS Cup last month to go alongside their second place finish in the league, combined with the women's 1st team reaching their first Cup Final, it is clear to see that Harwood has had a huge impact on volleyball at Glamorgan.

Despite this, the veteran player and coach has taken the decision to stand

down at the end of the season after seeing a huge transformation in the sport, believing the university's four sides need to be taken to the next level.

"I've been coaching here now for the last seven years, and I will be taking next year off," he told GlamSport.

"I've nominated some replacement coaches who are stricter than I am. I believe this is what the teams need now – a more heavy-handed approach and some more discipline on the court.

"I will be in the background watching the teams, being there on an advisory capacity. I've never classed myself as a great coach – I've classed my-

self as a good manager and a good organiser – hopefully I've proved that over my seven years here.

"It now needs to be passed onto someone who is a good coach who has discipline, and the coaches I have nominated can now help push the volleyball teams on further next year.

"It is just temporary at the moment, but after seven years of coaching at Glamorgan two or three nights a week, plus matches on the weekend, I know it's time for me to take a break.

Whether that is a one year break or long-term break as far as Glamorgan is concerned I don't know.

"During my time here volleyball has improved amazingly; in terms of support we have had from the Students Union and the support we've had from the Sports Development Officers it has been great." It's clear to see the joy that Harwood takes from volleyball – a sport he has been associated with for nearly 30 years now - something he aims to pass on to potential stars of the future.

His university coaching journey has seen him take Cardiff University into the top division, before focusing solely on Glamorgan – a move that has certainly paid off.

"I started off coaching Glamorgan and Cardiff University at the same time which was hard work, but volleyball is a sport I love, so I got a lot of enjoyment out of it.

"Cardiff University went up to the First Division, so I thought it was safe for me to leave them at that point and concentrate on Glamorgan who had only

just introduced volleyball. Glamorgan needed that three-year-plan to bring them to the point that they are at now.

"My policy is not so much for results, but for people to enjoy playing volleyball. A lot of these players are foreign students – and also a lot of British students – so this gives them the opportunity to try a sport that they have perhaps not tried before and go away with the knowledge of playing the sport.

It is this attitude to the sport that has allowed Harwood to build up a great team spirit that led to Glamorgan men's 1st team lifting the Western Conference Cup in Bristol in March – an honour which certainly went some way to cover the disappointment of missing out on top spot in the league on points difference.

"Winning the cup was a great success for the university," Harwood continued.

"We finished joint top in the league but missed out on 'point's difference' as they call it. It was disappointing

because the same thing has happened to us before, where we should have won the league but didn't.

"BUCS arrange it so that if we play the team that are in joint first place, if they win by however many points, they automatically go up. So rather than doing it by points on home goals and away goals scored, it comes down to this other system.

"Winning the cup does help to soften the blow. This year has been a good year because we've had two men's teams and two women's teams.

Though the success didn't stop there, as Harwood also oversaw the women's 1st side reach the Cup Final, where they fell 3-0 to rivals Swansea. This, along with the semi-finals appearance for the men's 2nd team, shows that the decision to bring in two additional sides certainly paid off.

Talking to GlamSport, Harwood said: "In the seven years that I've

*Continues on next page...*



been here we've had the one team for both the men and women - so it has been a lot harder work with the additional sides coming in, but a better outcome as far as I can see.

"The players have had more play and training time, helping to build them into the teams that they are now.

"Both the men and women's 1st teams reached the Cup Finals and finished towards the top of the league. So it has proved its worth having the two sets of teams, especially for the men whose second side also reached the cup semi-finals."

#### *This will be our first cup final*

The lasting impact Harwood has had on the Glamorgan volleyball sides is highlighted when looking at the women's 1st team, whose Cup Final appearance this season was the first time they had ever reached that stage of the competition.

Though delighted to see the women's side reach the final - as well as finishing third in the domestic league - Harwood believes that more could have been done in terms of the set-up of the sport.

"The women's side reaching the cup final is a good achievement in a sense that in the seven years that I have been coaching at Glamorgan, it is the first time that we have reached that stage of the competition.

"It is a disappointment in terms of the organisation of the volleyball competition which tied in with a lot of student exams, so we lost a couple of top players for some of our major matches.

"I think that cost us in a few games because we were unable to field our strongest team - we had to sacrifice some points, otherwise I believe the women would have been top of the league, as well as in the cup semi-finals."

With a successful season complete, attention can now turn towards next season, where Harwood believes that all four Glamorgan sides can truly push on to the next level: Promotion to the top tier.

"There is no reason why the men and women's sides shouldn't push on to the higher division next season," an optimistic Harwood said.

"I think that the men should definitely press on into the First Division next year.

"The women's sides have some great players, so I see no reason why they can't also now move up a league. They perhaps need to fight a bit harder, but there is no reason why they can't push on now just like the men next season.

These positive views also extend to the women's 2nd team,

who finished bottom of their league. Harwood puts this down to the fact that there is a large turnover of students in such a short amount of time, though this looks to now be changing, which is all down to the recruitment system in place at Glamorgan.

"A lot of students in the 2nd team are on a three or four year course, so there is potential there now to build a good 2nd team and a brilliant 1st team.

"It can be difficult because a lot of students are only there for a year or so, so we put in a lot of work and it's not so much wasted, but it means that we can now build on that ahead of next year with two full teams who are around for another few years.

"The reason there are so many volleyball players in Glamorgan is to do with our extensive campaign at the start of the year at the Fresher Fayre where we look to recruit players. At these initial sessions we can have at least 80 people come along, though that then gets whittled down, but it is an extensive push for volleyball players during these Fayre's which can prove successful - too successful in many ways because we then have to cut these numbers down!"

Despite the love and passion that Penarth resident Harwood shows to-

wards indoor volleyball, it's actually another version of the sport which first got him interested in a career which has now spanned for close to three decades - beach volleyball.

In fact, his passion for the beach-based sport was enough to persuade him to set-up Barry Island Beach Volleyball Club - the biggest of its kind in Britain.

"My love of volleyball is actually beach volleyball, which I have played for nearly 30 years. But I'm of course getting older now so I don't play as much, though I am the founding member of Barry Island Beach Volleyball Club.

"I founded that 17 years ago and it's now the biggest beach volleyball club in the UK where we now have over 175 members. I still play on weekends and even coach now-and-then, but when it came to winter months I got a little bored, so that's why I moved more towards indoor volleyball.

"Indoor volleyball has six people, whereas beach volleyball has only two people - so there is a big difference. With beach

volleyball, all the players need to know all the different skills, with indoor volleyball, the six players each have their own specific skills - so the two types of volleyball require a completely different mindset and the tactics can of course vary where with beach volleyball there are just two of you on virtually the same size court as indoor."

#### *We've lost a lot of funding*

On the back of the biggest summer of sport Britain has ever witnessed - including additional coverage of sports such as volleyball - Harwood believes that more still needs to be done with regards to getting youngsters interested in the sport.

Volleyball doesn't receive the same coverage in Britain as it does in other European countries, and this looks set to continue with the Olympic committee recently announcing that it is set to cut funding for the sport.

"Volleyball doesn't get half as much coverage as it should do, because it really is a great sport to watch. We've lost a lot of funding through the Olympic committee, so there is no funding there, but I would certainly love to see it covered more.

"Volleyball is the second most popular sport in the world after football, so judging by that it doesn't get the

coverage in Britain that it needs. I don't think anybody in Britain has latched onto the enthusiasm of the sport, whereas in other countries across Europe there is good television coverage and massive crowds attending matches which is lacking in this country.

"The main reason for that is the fact that volleyball is not on the curriculum in schools in Britain outside of Scotland - that is why there is a higher attendance in volleyball in Scotland than in Wales or Northern Ireland, for example.

"This is where our problems lie, if it was to be brought into the curriculum then there would be more interest generated. It is a non-contact, non-sexist sport - played by men or women - and there are not many of those sports around. The government says these are the types of sports would need to encourage youngsters to play, but that opportunity has never been taken up."

The sport in general may not have moved on in terms of coverage, but Carl Harwood can be happy knowing that he has played his part in helping to revolutionise volleyball at the University of Glamorgan. Now it's over to the new management team to take Glamorgan to the next level.

The coaches I have nominated can now push on the sides even further next year

# ADVERTISEMENT





## [Half-time interview]

After taking the decision to stand down as manager following a memorable hat-trick of achievements - league, cup and team of the season - Sarah Adams talks exclusively to GlamSport for this month's HTI.

Glamorgan won every game as they cruised to the top of the Western 2B table, picking up the Western Conference Cup last month to round-off another successful season under the management of Adams.

After finishing second in both competitions in the 2011/2012 season, Adams used this disappointment as the key motivation to dominate both league and cup this time around - with a 10-0 victory against rivals Swansea sticking out as a personal highlight for the Bristolian. "There was a clear motivation from the players that they were going to work hard to avoid the same disappointment as last season, and that desire to win shows in our results this year," Adams said.

"My personal highlight was our victory over Swansea's 1st team. For me this win highlights the hard work we have all put in over the last three years. Whereas four seasons ago it was us that faced a 10-0 defeat in the same fixture, it was now the other way around."

"Though unfortunately this season will be my last as I feel I have taken the team as far as I can. I am massively proud of what we have

achieved over the past three years and wish them all the best as they continue to grow.

In Adams' three years at the helm, football at Glamorgan in terms of female football has well and truly pushed on. This is down to a number of long-term goals put in place by Adams - which in turn comes down to the hours of hard work carried out by her players.

"The standard of Female Football at Glamorgan has improved drastically in my time here," Adams said.

"When I started I set a number of long term goals - the first of which was to increase the opportunity for females to participate in football at Glamorgan, which we have now done with the recent inclusion of a 2nd team who have proved to be a solid side who will continue to improve.

"Secondly we set out a playing philosophy which we have stuck to and trained week-in week-out to give us that edge over other teams.

"Our success

has not been down to luck or individual players it has been possible because of the hard work, determination and will to achieve from everyone, which has seen us triumph in both competitions.

It was last month's cup success which truly put the icing on the cake of what has been a memorable season for all involved in women's football at Glamorgan. Scoring 20 goals without a single goal being conceded in the three rounds to the final, Glam not only won the cup, but won it in true style.

It culminated in the 8-0 victory against UWE, which the soon to be ex-manager again puts down to the organisation and hard work of her squad.

"We weren't tested with our opponents and sailed through until the final," Adams continued. We have played UWE twice in the league and have come out on top both times after very tough competitive games, so we knew we would have to be organised and prepared to get the win.

"We worked hard in the weeks leading up to the game and this showed as the girls played incredibly and deserved the eight goal winning margin we won by."



## Shop window

This month we look at shinpads, boots and the latest must-have rugby headgear



### Nike T90 Charge Shin Pads

£19.99 ●●●

Light, breathable and durable, the Nike T90 Charge shin pads give you excellent coverage and the freedom to play to your strengths. The T90 Charge Shin Pads are ideal if you are looking for a great-value, quality shin guard that provides extra protection along the tibia. With an anatomically-correct fit designed to fit the shape of the shin, the Nike T90 Charge shin pads are perfect for match play and weekly training sessions. High-density shell with reinforced tibia gives you high-strength protection.



### Nike Predator J40

£69.99 ●●●

Despite being a football shoe on the outside, the Nike Predator J40 has always been taking the heart of one of Nike's award-winning running shoes and equipping it for the beautiful game. In the time since the launch of the last Predator, Nike's running shoes have evolved at an unprecedented pace - and that's something that definitely shows on the new boot which is available from July this year exclusively at JD Sports. These will certainly enhance your passing ability on the field.



### Club Rugby headgear

£49.99 ●●●●

This is arguably the the most reliable headgear on the market, and a reasonable price. Designed by a company that started in the rugby rooted New Zealand. The padding is made of polyester material allowing it to stretch to and fit snugly on the head. It is designed to be 'breathable', meaning it should - and does - cause no problems during a game. Canterbury of New Zealand products have always been seen as being reliable, and this latest product of the production line doesn't disappoint.

## [The columnist]

# DANIEL LEWIS

A year on from the start of one of the greatest summers of sport Britain has ever witnessed, GlamSport's columnist looks at the effect it has had on the country's national sport...

A message needs to be sent out that there is no room for racism in football

On the back end of the most successful summer of sport Britain has ever witnessed, it appears that football has fallen victim to the sporting bug. It was first caught in late June as Andy Murray faced off against Roger Federer and lasted through to the dramatic Ryder Cup finale at the Medinah Country Club in September.

It was an incredible few months of sport which saw tears of pain, tears of joy and every emotion in between. But come August and the start of the new football season, it appeared that many had fallen out of love with the beautiful game. The talk of dramatic finals, tense showdowns, team spirit and gold medals galore, had been replaced by diving, crowd trouble, poor refereeing decisions and claims of racism. Football was back.

The past 12 months has seen the sport dragged through the mud with a drawn-out court case to decide that John Terry had not racially abused Anton Ferdinand, though the FA went ahead and dished out a four game ban and a hefty fine to the former England player, just to show that they were trying to rectify the issue of racism - something which still lingers around the sport, despite countless efforts to eradicate it completely from the game.

With the court case slowly receiving less and less column inches, the current hot topic of football sparked back into life when England travelled to Serbia last month for an U-21 match which will not be remembered for the great defensive show from a young English side, but instead for events that showed football finds it impossible to move into the modern day.

The scenes which seen England's Danny Rose subjected to vile racist abuse, before triggering a mass brawl, has sparked the debate back into full-swing. It led to players somewhat boycotting the Kick it out campaign by shunning the promotional shirts in pre-match warm-ups, sending out a message to the organisation that it just simply isn't doing enough.

Rio Ferdinand and brother Anton - the latter of which will probably be best remembered after retiring for talk of racist abuse he was alleged to have received from Mr. Terry, rather than anything he has achieved on the pitch - claimed in a joint statement that not enough was being done to fully 'kick it out' of the game. They have a point.

To highlight this, we simply have to look at some stats which perfectly highlight that

not enough is being done to punish those found guilty of racially abusing a fellow professional. In 2004, Shaun Wright-Phillips and Ashley Cole were subjected to monkey chants at the Bernabeu Stadium, when England played Spain in a friendly match. It was anything but friendly, with the Spanish FA having to pay up a fine of £44,750.

Three years later, and it was Nedum Onuoha's turn to be at the centre of a race-storm as he received abuse from Serbian fans during an U-21 fixture (sound familiar?). Serbia were later fined just £16,500.

In September 2008, Emile Heskey was racially abused by Croatian fans who directed monkey chants towards him. The Croatian Federation were fined a mere £15,000 - see a pattern emerging here?

In September 2011, the Bulgarian FA received a fine of £34,000 following abuse aimed towards Ashley Young during a Euro 2012 qualifier in Sofia. This came just days after Sepp Blatter controversially said that racism was not a problem in football.

So let's put this into some perspective. At this summer's Euros, Danish striker Nicklas Bendtner lowered his shorts to show a pair of branded Paddy Power 'lucky pants'. The former Arsenal player was later fined £80,000 for breaching FIFA regulations regarding advertising - that's more than the fines received by Croatia, Bulgaria and Serbia combined.

On the back of the Professional Foot-

ballers' Association's six-point plan which aims to clamp down on racism in the sport, it appears that a fine just won't cut it. UEFA have a chance to send out a strong message on the subject when it comes to looking into the recent alleged racist abuse received by Rose in Serbia (the Serbian FA still deny hearing any type of monkey chants).

In September I travelled to the Balkan state to watch Wales, in a trip that will forever be remembered as Welsh footballs lowest point on the pitch in recent memory, falling 6-1 to the Serbs. All talk of violence was quickly quashed as supporters mingled together in Novi Sad prior to the game. One thing that was clear however, these fans take their football extremely seriously.

With England going 2-0 up on aggregate last month - crushing any hope Serbia had of qualifying in the process - tempers began to flair and the rest is history. Those in charge now have a big decision to make, whether to simply fine the Serbian FA, ban the home supporters, or exclude Serbia from qualifying for any major tournament at all age levels for the time being.

With Serbia receiving numerous fines already in the past couple of years, as well as a ban on home supporters due to violence, it's clear to see it's not enough to stop those who think it's okay to abuse a player simply because of the colour of his skin. UEFA must come to a decision with FIFA to forget all the logistics and exclude Serbia from international football for a period of time to send out a message.

Forget fining a country. Forget banning supporters. More needs to be done to kick racism out of football for good, and the only way that can be achieved is by strongly punishing players and nations in a way that will truly send across the message that there is no room for racism in football.



England and Serbia players clash in the U-21 qualifier (Rex Features)

# Extra time: Chris Harper

**“I want to promote basketball. I want to die with the basketball”**

*There's more to Glamorgan's 6ft 2 basketball coach Chris Harper than meets the eye. But the 50-year-old veteran was happy to impart some of his wisdom, reminisce over his past life in Oregon where he stood on the brink of making it in the NBA with the San Antonio Spurs, and explain why he still gets a kick out of teaching the wonderful game to the next generation.*

**Chris, you used to play College Basketball for Oregon University, which is probably as prestigious in the US as League 1 football is in the UK, so how did you end up here in Wales?**

Well at first I went to play in the German Basketball League for a year, then before I trained to become a Physical Education Teacher in California I played in the New Zealand league for a year. When I came back to California I worked for a year and then my agent got me a coaching job in the UK and I've been here for 20 years now.

**You must have had an ambition to make it to the NBA?**

Well we all did! I got drafted in to the NBA in 1985 to play for San Antonio Spurs but it didn't pan out and that's when I went overseas when I was 23.

**And do you still play basketball in your spare time?**

Actually yes, I played for a team last week called The Warriors down at the Leisure Centre in Cardiff Bay. I coach them usually but their second team were low on numbers so I laced up for them and I didn't do too badly - we won the game!

**So how did you become a coach here for the Glamorgan teams?**

Well some of the girls from here came to watch a Cardiff Warriors game as they were friendly with the players there, and they asked if I would come along and coach the girl's university team, and it went from there.

**So the girls actually head hunted you and you obliged?**

Yeah, no problem! One thing I will never do is turn down kids in basketball, I want to promote basketball. I want to die with

the basketball. So for the last two years I've been coaching both the boys and girls basketball teams here.

**And what gives you that motivation to appear every week completely voluntarily?**

Well there's not a lot of money going in to basketball in this country so I partly feel I ought to, but it's also the smiles on the player's faces, the joy of teaching basketball and being able to pass my knowledge on to them.

**In YouTube videos of you playing from back in the day, it looks like you had a formidable jump shot. Was that your signature move?**

Yeah I played as point guard, always in the starting five through my career but I would consider myself a scorer rather than just filling a position as a play-maker.

**Yeah, we're ranked at about 40 something in the world, next to Kazakhstan...**

Also it doesn't tend to get introduced at a young age here in the same way as rugby and football is. Most kids here don't usually get to play basketball in school until high school.

**Do you have a basketball hero?**

A few of my biggest inspirations are Martin Luther King, Muhammad Ali, J. F. Kennedy, and Robert F. Kennedy. In terms of basketball, probably Magic Johnson. He changed the game. He was the first ever player to master all five positions and that is still a very rare talent even today.

**You've got a reputation for making a lot of noise from on the bench but you never seem to get in trouble with the refs even while opposing coaches are threatened with ejection from games, how do you manage to stay out of trouble?**

You can only push a ref so far, you know? You've got to know when to stop talking. Get them on your side and then you back off.

**How do you get them on your side?**

You speak to them before the game and have a laugh with them. If you think they've made a mistake then let them know but stop when you feel you might be interfering too much for their liking. Let them get on with it.

**Do you think there is one fundamental skill in basketball that can be placed over all others?**

I think fitness and conditioning are the very important aspects of every sport - speed, strength and stamina can win games and scare another team. But overall I think it's team work and communication. You play together, you win together.

Our men's and women's 1st teams are both undefeated in their leagues and I think it's because they all get along and they like each other. They have fun and care about one another as a team.

