

26th February 2025



In Touch

What a cracking game and what a fitting send off for life member Laurie Wallace our league match against Edwardians at The Linney proved to be.

In the end Edwardians had the win 10-7, a long penalty kick winning the game for them, but how Ludlow made them work for it. A draw might have been fairer and could have been achieved had we opted for one of the two penalty kicks we won in Edwardians' 22 in the last few minutes. In the end we opted for broke and a dropped pass meant we finished with just a single losing bonus point.

We might even have won had a couple of passes gone to hand when we had big overlaps. With one or two missing faces through injury Ludlow put on a defiant defensive display they should be very proud of. And on occasions they found some big holes in the Edwardians' defence. Back row, Charlie Doyle in particular made some big penetrating runs which earned him Ludlow Brewery 'Man of the Match' for the second week on the trot.

Edwardians were first on the scoreboard with a lovely sidestep from one of their centres after a long period of pressure. Ludlow quickly equalised after a Charlie Doyle break set up a maul from which Gwyn Pierce crashed over. Will Hodnett added the conversion. Further Ludlow pressure brought them a long-range penalty but Hodnett's kick hit the post enabling Edwardians to clear their lines. A similar long range penalty kick from their fly half was successful giving Edwardians the lead at half time 10-7.

In the second both sides could have scored but for dropped passes. Tom Perkins made a tremendous break from deep in Ludlow's half, beat two men and kicked ahead, Edwardians fullback fumbled, fell and, with the try line beckoning, Josh Jukes was carded after being deemed by the ref to have not allowed him sufficient time to get to his feet.

Saturday was volunteers' day with Ludlow putting on a meal as a thank you for all those who help us during the course of the year but it doubled as a celebration of Laurie's life, very fitting as Laurie was always the first to be put his name forward if there was a job to be done. We all stood and raised a glass of port to his memory before the family went outside to witness both teams form up and a celebratory one-minute clap for Laurie. Laurie's son Andrew lined up with the Ludlow team. Laurie's funeral has yet to be arranged but I will let you know as soon as I know.

On Saturday we are at home again against bottom of the league, Whitchurch, kick off 3pm. The Seconds are also at home and due to play Camp Hill 3pm also.

See you soon,
Andy Wright
President Ludlow Rugby Club

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Obituary – Laurie Wallace

Laurie Wallace sadly passed away at Stretton Hall nursing Home on Tuesday, Feb 18 aged 80 after a long illness. Laurie was a life member of Ludlow Rugby Club and had been a playing member of this club since the early 70's and played even in 2016 when he appeared in a game at The Linney with his two sons.

Perhaps most importantly he was the driving force that brought Ludlow Rugby Club to The Linney and played key roles in both the planning and the building of it. He is a former rugby club fund raising chairman, secretary, former editor of a very successful club newsletter, former captain, the coach of Ludlow's only women's team, and a faithful supporter of the club at both senior and mini and junior level. He was made a life member in 2017, an honour that affords free membership, but Laurie continued to pay his subs until his death.

For many years his was the heart that powered club rugby in Ludlow. At one time his would have been the first name on the team sheet at whatever level he chose to play. Often, he chose to play in the lower teams, where he believed the essence of the sport lay, to mentor younger players and engender a deep feeling of belonging to that team. It was a matter of pride to be chosen for Laurie's 4th team! Former President, chairman and teammate, Roger Evans, remembers when Laurie was introduced to rugby:

"It was pre Linney days when we practised at the cricket club. Laurie was there in a green goalkeeper's jersey and having looked at his size we thought he was destined for the second row. We explained what was required of him. We had a practise lineout, and he soared higher than anyone else, and punched the ball into the darkness.

And Steve Tomkins who was Laurie's second row partner for many years:

"When I first arrived at Ludlow, Lawrie was the first person to meet me on the pitch, welcome me to Ludlow and shake my hand. I think it was 1974. We both played many years together in the second row and once even as third team centres when every time we got a pass, we set the ball up for a try! He led a full life on his own terms."

A larger-than-life character, Laurie's personality matched his six-foot four frame. He was known widely through the world of rugby but most particularly in his beloved Wales where many of that country's best-known stars were known personally to Laurie.

Reading this people will query my spelling of his name. Interestingly he spelt his name two ways, Lawrie also, and only found out late in life that his name was spelt Lawrie on his birth certificate. He told me he didn't really mind how people spelt his name, it was more important to him that they knew him! He also had many careers, from buyer for McConnells and Nuway Benson to agricultural chemicals salesman to electrician, from licensee to house manager for Ludlow's Shakespearian Festival Laurie had many incarnations.

He was born in Wales. Apart from his twin sister Ann, with whom he shared a birthday in January, he also had three brothers, two of whom survive him. Laurie had two sons with different partners but was devoted to both the boys taking the opportunity whenever possible to watch, Alex and Andrew play rugby for Ludlow and in latter years to watch Andrew playing gigs all over the country. His former wife Linda recalls a trip to South Wales with Andrew aged about three when Laurie introduced Andy to Welsh legend Barry John who tapped Andrew on the head and said he hoped he would soon be playing for Wales!

Laurie's family have been stalwarts throughout the long illness that he suffered after having three bouts of pneumonia in quick succession in 2022. He spent some time in hospital at Telford and then moved to Stretton Hall. His former wife, Linda, with whom he remained firm friends, spent much time caring for him in latter years. Several Rugby Club members visited him at All Stretton, where his bedroom was a shrine to all things rugby, but three former playing colleagues, fellow life member Glyn Nash, Paul Mountford, and Nigel Richards could be found at Laurie's bedside without fail every weekend. One of his proudest possessions was a get-well card signed by Welsh ref Nigel Owens which was arranged by former teammate, Buzzer, Bob Flemons.

Laurie, you will be sorely missed.