

NICHOLLS, ERITH GWYN (1875 - 1939), Wales and Cardiff Rugby centre three-quarter

Name: Erith Gwyn Nicholls
Date of birth: 1875
Date of death: 1939
Gender: Male
Occupation: Wales and Cardiff Rugby centre three-quarter
Area of activity: Sports and Leisure Pursuits
Author: Moelwyn Idwal Williams

probably one of the most famous Welsh Rugby players although born in Gloucestershire in 1875. In his youth he played at half-back and centre for the old Cardiff Stars - and, for a brief period, with the now long defunct Cardiff Harlequins as full-back and half-back. Later, he played as centre, full-back and half-back for the Cardiff Reserves. On New Year's Day, 1894, Nicholls played his first game in the Cardiff side - as a full-back. He played three times in that position and then took up the position in which he became famous. He captained Wales on many occasions, the most famous being in 1905 when Wales beat New Zealand at the Cardiff Arms Park - the only defeat of the 'All Blacks' tour. Nicholls was 'capped' for Wales twenty-four times between 1896 and 1906. He was the author of *The Modern Rugby Game and How to Play It*, London : 1916(?). About 1909 Nicholls entered into partnership with his brother-in-law, [H. B. Winfield](#), and together they established the Victoria Laundries at Whitchurch and other centres in South Wales. At intervals he sat upon the committee of the Cardiff Rugby Club and from 1925 to 1931 was a member of the Welsh Rugby Union. For several seasons he was, too, one of the Welsh 'Big Five.' He died 24 March 1939. On 26 December 1949, the gates, which were erected to his memory at Cardiff Arms Park, were officially opened.

Author

Dr Moelwyn Idwal Williams

Sources

Rugby Football Annual, 1939-40, 11

W. J. T. Collins, *Rugby Recollections* (1948), 14

The Times, 25 March and 18 May 1939

Western Mail, 25 March 1939 and 28 December 1949

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Gwyn Nicholls](#)

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