

# WALES

## **Gary Jones and Tim Rees**

A new partnership for this Camrose, though two very experienced Camrose campaigners. Gary was part of the historic first ever Welsh win two years ago playing with his son Dafydd. Now that Dafydd is taking some time away from serious bridge to spend more time with his new daughter, Gary has teamed up with Tim. Gary did well to maintain his concentration during the first Welsh Trial as it was then that he received the news that he had become a grandfather for the first time. It was noticeable that he had a huge grin on his face for the remainder of the trials, even when the bridge wasn't going so well. Gary was part of the team which won the A Final at this year's Brighton Teams. Tim has represented Wales in over twenty Camrose and a number of European Championships in partnership with Filip Kurbalija, including being playing Captain in 2008 in Pau. Tim has come close to winning the Camrose on a couple of occasions and wants to rectify the omission this year. For a couple of years (2006 and 2008) Tim topped the Gold Point rankings but now that he plays some of his bridge in North America his home wins are somewhat reduced. He keeps fit as a hockey referee in his local Berkshire League. Tim was grateful that the Welsh Trials used screens as otherwise he would have needed sun glasses to avoid the glare from Gary's smile!

## **Peter Goodman and Mike Pownall**

Peter now has more than fifty Camrose matches for Wales and finally achieved the win he had been waiting for so long as part of the victorious Welsh team in 2010 in partnership with Adrian Thomas. Peter now spends most of his time in the Republic and it may come as no great surprise that Welsh performances against the South have improved with his insider knowledge! Mike Pownall was part of Wales' first ever foray into Europe as a member of the Open Team in partnership with Peter at the 2001 Championships in Tenerife. Mike is widely regarded as the worst ever Wales NPC at the 2010 Championships in Ostende. As a consequence the selectors now try to put him on the team to avoid that possibility in the future. Mike and Peter are the only surviving Welsh pair from the 2012 European Championships in Dublin.

## **Filip Kurbalija and Patrick Shields**

When Patrick Shields and Paul Denning agreed to have a break from their long standing and very successful partnership and Filip and Tim Rees had done the same a few years earlier it seemed a natural thing for them to pair up, which they did finishing a very creditable second (behind Peter and Mike) in the Welsh Trials. Like Tim, Filip has spent a long time trying to win the Camrose and hopes this will be his year. Filip has numerous successes in national competitions having won all of the Welsh events on multiple occasions, the Brighton Teams in 1993 (in a team which included Mike Pownall and Peter Goodman) and more recently the Spring 4's in 2008 (in partnership with Tim Rees). Patrick's recent successes include winning the Spring 4's in 2010 (in partnership with Paul Denning and as part of an all Welsh team) and winning Crockfords in 2011 (again in partnership with Paul and Welsh team mates). Most importantly Patrick was part of the winning Welsh Camrose Team of 2010, again in partnership with Paul.

## **Alan Stephenson NPC**

Alan was the non-playing captain for Wales historic first ever Camrose win which happened on home soil in Llandrindrod Wells in 2010. After his first ever outing as NPC Alan did threaten to "quit" whilst ahead but was persuaded to take up the reigns again for last years' campaign and again this year when the selectors once more placed their faith in him. Alan is thankful to Mike Pownall for laying the groundwork. It seems that an NPC who doesn't rant and rave and call his players useless is OK. Alan did learn a very valuable lesson at the second Camrose weekend last year when the Welsh were fined two VP's during the last match due to a mobile phone violation. It seems it's not enough to ask the players if they have a mobile, so now strip searches are the order of the day!