

# FRED KEENOR: A WELSH SOCCER HERO

Martin Johnes

*University of Wales, Cardiff*

*I would have liked to see him against today's fancy dans with their elbowing, shirt-pulling and poking out tongues. Fred would have tackled them once - they wouldn't have come back for more.<sup>1</sup>*

*Keenor was worth two men ... Bandaged and limping at the last, he was the hero of the match.<sup>2</sup>*



On the 23rd of April 1927, Fred Keenor climbed the famous Wembley steps to receive the FA Cup from the King. His team, Cardiff City, had become the first, and as yet the only, Welsh team to win the coveted trophy.

The victory was a momentous and much celebrated occasion in the history of Wales. That morning a Welsh newspaper had printed a picture of the Cardiff City captain knocking Lloyd George off a pedestal labelled 'the most important man in Wales'.<sup>3</sup> The game made Keenor a Welsh national hero in a way that the rugby stars that preceded him had not been. South and north celebrated Cardiff City's achievement and Fred Keenor was at the centre of that triumph.

During the inter-war years, Keenor's name was synonymous with Cardiff City. His playing career with the club spanned almost two decades, from his signing as a seventeen-year-old amateur in 1912, until his release in 1931. In those years, he made 504 appearances for the club, many as captain, and won thirty-one caps for Wales. So often the linchpin and inspiration of both club and country, he played for Cardiff City through its rise from the Southern League to FA Cup winners, as well as leading Wales to the home championship. By the time he retired from playing, he had become something of a legend in Welsh soccer. Recent historical work has led to a reinterpretation of the way we see sports stars. There has been a new emphasis on the meaning of individuals rather than who they actually were. As Moorhouse points out, they were emblematic figures; representatives of wider values and experiences.<sup>4</sup> Using this approach, Keenor's career sheds further light on the nature of inter-war soccer stars. By looking at what made Keenor popular and then what he came to symbolise, a different kind of footballing hero is uncovered.

Frederick Charles Keenor, the son of a bricklayer and mason, was born in Cardiff in July 1894. His rise to the status of professional footballer followed the conventional path of so many of his contemporaries. His first taste of organised soccer was at schoolboy level where he won a variety of honours. He captained his Elementary School team to a local league championship and played in both his city's and country's representative schoolboy sides. Upon leaving education he found work but continued playing in the Cardiff and District League. His improving ability eventually came to the attention of the young Cardiff City club. In 1912, aged seventeen, Keenor was 'pounced upon' after a game in a local park by one of his former schoolmasters who was now a Cardiff City director. He was pressured into signing amateur terms for the club and, by the end of the year, had turned professional for a weekly wage of ten shillings. Like so

many Edwardian footballers, he continued to work outside the game as well as playing. With his two wages he said that he felt like a millionaire.<sup>5</sup> His professional career developed slowly with only limited opportunities in the senior side but then, just as he was beginning to establish himself in the first-team, war was declared. While amateurs and rugby men looked to the 'greater game' on the fields of France, soccer decided to play on. It was a decision that was to make the game a target for abuse and hostility. By 1915, more because of falling attendances and practical difficulties than moral pressure, soccer relented to the conditions of war-time and suspended competitive fixtures. The situation left Keenor and other players out of work. With little alternative, he followed the call-to-arms and enlisted.

Like so many of his generation the Great War scarred Keenor, both physically and mentally, for the rest of his life. He served in the 17th Middlesex Battalion (the Footballers' Battalion) and was injured at the Somme in 1916. A sergeant-major told Keenor that he was the worst rifle marksman that he had ever met. His rifle skills apparently reflected his shooting with the ball since he was later told that he was just about the worst shot in the Football League. A leg wound he received later in the war threatened to end his footballing career before it had really started but it healed and Keenor survived the conflict. After being demobbed, Lloyd George's 'land fit for heroes' was no more apparent to Keenor than it was to most of the other returning soldiers. He found work in a gasworks and on a milk-round, but unlike many of his contemporaries, this insecure situation was to be only temporary and Keenor rejoined Cardiff City when professional soccer recommenced in 1919.<sup>6</sup>

The 1920s saw Cardiff City establish itself as one of the leading clubs in Britain. Existing in a populous region eager for first-class soccer, the club attracted large attendances enabling its skilful manager to purchase quality players. The team rose rapidly from the Southern League to the First Division of the Football League, missing out on the Championship in 1923-24 by a fraction of a goal. But it was in the FA Cup that the club achieved its greatest glories. After being beaten semi-finalists twice and runners-up in 1925, Cardiff City finally took the Cup out of England in 1927. It was to be the pinnacle of their success, as the depression that had engulfed the region they represented finally took its toll on the belligerent

soccer club. Gate receipts had already begun to tumble and the income from the successful years was invested in the ground not the team. After 1927 the club's fall from the top of the soccer ladder was rapid. Four years after lifting the FA Cup at Wembley, Keenor found himself captain of a team relegated to the Third Division South.

Keenor played an integral role in the club's successes during these years, in the process developing for himself a reputation that was to later stand head and shoulders above his team-mates. He became the inspiration and captain of both club and country and a favourite amongst the supporters. Unlike most of soccer's great heroes through the generations, Keenor was not the type of player who normally attracted adoration. He was neither a skilful dribbler nor a prolific goal-scorer. Instead he was a rugged and uncompromising defender, playing usually at centre-half or half-back. Of his later compatriots, he had more in common with Vinnie Jones than Ryan Giggs. In short, he was one of soccer's hard men. Skill on the ball was not his forte, neither was his size, being only 5' 7", but he more than made up for it with his strength, fitness and energy. His team mate, Ernie Curtis, said of him,

... he was one of the hardest tacklers in the game, some said he was dirty but he was just hard. Nobody took liberties with old Fred ... [He] could run all night, he couldn't run with the ball mind you, but he could run all day.<sup>7</sup>

Such was Keenor's strength that in 1919 he even sparred with the former European feather-weight champion boxer Jim Driscoll, while the latter was training at Ninian Park, Cardiff City's ground.<sup>8</sup> In 1928, it was said that 'He might not be a stylish player but his doggedness and determination makes him one of the most effective centre halves in the country.' Charlie Buchan, the defeated Arsenal captain in the 1927 Cup Final, described him as having 'a store of energy [which] seemed inexhaustible in defending his goal and supplying his forwards with crisp passes.'<sup>9</sup> His commitment during a match was total. Such levels of fitness required hard training, particularly when, liking a drink and being a heavy smoker, the rest of your life was not always dedicated to staying in peak condition. While the other Cardiff players were doing ball practice, he was lapping the pitch in old army boots. He would often turn up late for training and, ignoring the

trainer and the rest of the team, just begin running around the ground to build up his stamina and work off the previous night's beer.<sup>10</sup> His hard style may have won him friends in Cardiff but he was not always so kindly treated by supporters of the teams which had to oppose him. While at Crewe, Keenor was assaulted at the end of a match, then followed to the train station and had to be given a police escort.<sup>11</sup> Playing for Cardiff City in a match at Bolton Wanderers, he was constantly booed because, during a recent Wales-England game, he had collided with a Bolton player leaving the latter injured and unable to play that day. True to his determination, Keenor claimed the barracking affected Bolton's play more than his own.<sup>12</sup> Whether the injury was accidental or not, Keenor's playing style was not so popular with those on the receiving end. Alongside his strength and stamina, Keenor was renowned for his courage. In 1929 he injured his neck on the morning of a match between Wales and Scotland. With Wales unable to get a reserve in time, Keenor played with his neck strapped and under orders not to head the ball.<sup>13</sup> He endured the pain in order not to let his side down.

Keenor's other main asset was his leadership. His ability to inspire others made him a natural choice as captain of both club and country. Although he did not become the Cardiff City captain until the 1925-26 season, his influence and length of time at the club made it later seem as if he had always led the team. No doubt such leadership skills were also instrumental in pushing him towards management as his playing days drew to a close. He was said to have 'marshalled his men magnificently' in the 1927 FA Cup Final and in 1928 was described as 'a leader in every sense of the word, he commands respect of colleagues and sets an inspiring example by his whole hearted enthusiasm.'<sup>14</sup> Yet he could also be a domineering leader, shouting and swearing at his team-mates and forcing them into action instead of using more subtle means of encouragement. He was nearly sent off playing for Wales against Scotland in 1930 for swearing at the rest of the Welsh team, until the referee 'realised' that Keenor was so involved in motivating the others that he did not realise what he was saying.<sup>15</sup> When Tom Farquharson, Cardiff City's goalkeeper, was chipped from the half-way line in a Cup match against Blackpool, Keenor ran back and began shaking him roughly while the crowd shouted at them to get on with the game. Such a belligerent temperament did not always endear him to the

Cardiff City management. The end of his career at the club was marked by arguments with staff and other players. Keenor even had a transfer request granted during the FA Cup winning season after being unhappy about being dropped for several matches.<sup>16</sup> He had his opinions and standards and expected both fellow players and club officials to conform to them. Thus he was the quintessential 'British' player: physical, committed and determined, making up in strength for what he lacked in skill. And he expected the same from those around him.

It was in this style of play that Keenor's popularity originated. He embodied the working class masculine ideal: strong and brave, an individual yet part of a team. He displayed all the virtues that the supporters on the 'bob bank' at Ninian Park valued. The agile deftness of a rugby fly-half may have been admired and even revered in south Wales, but it was the more down-to-earth but directed brute strength of a rugby prop-forward, a boxer or a soccer centre-half that was more in touch with what local working men experienced in their daily lives. They valued and celebrated the artists of the game but it was the skilled artisans that they related to most closely. Thus when a Stakhanovite-like player came along, he could be as much of a hero as the wizards of dribble and scorers of spectacular goals. Although as Richard Holt points out, attempts to make precise links between sporting cultures and the nature of work are tentative, there are obvious parallels between the characteristics that Keenor embodied and those of the coal industry that dominated the lives of so many Cardiff City supporters.<sup>17</sup> Keenor may not have been a master of ball-control, but he still had a degree of skill that enabled him to become a professional player in the first place. There was a talented player beneath the rough veneer. Much as miners were proud of the physical side of their work, they were also quick to point out the technique involved. Strength and courage were admirable but one still had to know how to apply them.

There was nothing particularly Welsh about the attributes and values that contributed to Keenor's popularity. They were shared by working class communities across Britain and were just as prominent in the sporting heroes of the north of England.<sup>18</sup> The Welsh press did not try and claim he reflected the nation's attributes in the same way they had with rugby players a generation earlier.<sup>19</sup> However, Keenor's popularity did owe much to his roots; not only his Welshness but more importantly the fact

that he played for his home-town. The professional nature of soccer created teams made up of players from across Britain. This did not prevent them from becoming representatives of the towns they played for, it was the team that was important not the individual, but when a local player did stand out it was a welcome change. Keenor was a 'Cardiff boy', as the press were well aware. They repeatedly proclaimed how the city could be proud that one of its sons was an integral part of its multi-national, star-studded soccer team. He acted as evidence that soccer success had not just been imported into Cardiff but that it had home-grown roots as well. The presence of Keenor and other local men was emphasised by soccer writers in order to take the sting out of the rugby fraternity's accusations that the professional game brought no honour to the city. Had Cardiff City had no local players, there still would have been pride in their achievements but the press ensured that Keenor's background did not go unforgotten. The average supporter may not have been concerned with the nuances of their motives but he still absorbed the message. Supporters were not just passive consumers of everything they read. They already valued Keenor for his effective play and had a pride in their town, but the press did contribute to his popularity by emphasising particular facets of his background.

Keenor's pride in Wales helped reinforce his popularity.<sup>20</sup> Cardiff City drew many of its supporters from across the region's industrial valleys. To these fans Cardiff City were as much representatives of south Wales, and on occasions the whole of the nation, as they were of Cardiff.<sup>21</sup> Keenor, through his commitment to playing for his country and his public rhetoric, appealed to such sentiments. Like all good Welshmen, he saw England as the primary enemy: 'We Welshmen do not mind much if we have to bow the knee to Scotland or Ireland but we do take a special delight in whacking England'.<sup>22</sup> In Scotland people valued the stars who did well against the 'auld enemy'; inter-war Welsh soccer did not enjoy that luxury that often but its supporters appreciated someone who talked a good fight.<sup>23</sup> He acknowledged the importance of Cardiff City to Wales at large. Of the club's elevation to the Football League he said, 'We had made up our minds that, come what may, we'd do our best to shine and show England that Wales could run a big club successfully'.<sup>24</sup> Before the 1927 FA Cup Final, he talked of bringing the trophy to Wales not Cardiff.<sup>25</sup> Keenor was not alone in such rhetoric. Both the press and club administrators liked to

portray the wider importance of soccer in south Wales and they may have even encouraged Keenor to express such attitudes. Nonetheless, Keenor was telling people what they wanted to hear and this helped ensure that it was not just the Welshmen of Cardiff who appreciated him.

It has been argued that the maximum wage helped ensure that players remained part of the community from which they came. Through continuing to live in the same area and earning relatively similar wages, there were no inseparable gulfs between the stars and their supporters.<sup>26</sup> Fred Keenor's life shows that there are limitations to this interpretation. He built a house he had designed himself in a select part of Cardiff and developed a passion for the more middle class recreations of motoring and shooting.<sup>27</sup> The maximum wage may not have made Keenor rich but it, together with money earned from putting his name to articles and products, and the free time a professional player enjoyed, enabled him to develop some tastes that were hardly typical of his background. Yet despite this, his fame and success did not remove him from his roots or take away the prejudices that they had instilled. In 1927 he visited his old school with the FA Cup; a genuine gesture that helped him remain part of the community.<sup>28</sup> He described foreign tours as a pleasant break but complained that the food was strange.<sup>29</sup> Driving large cars and shooting rabbits was one thing, fancy foreign food was quite another. The actual text that was Fred Keenor may no longer have been that of a typical working man but he and his supporters read it that way.

Tony Mason has argued that the press was important in 'creating the star player'. Reporters picked out potential key-men before a game, highlighted good performances after it and for 'away' matches, provided the main, and often the only, source of information on how individuals had played.<sup>30</sup> As we have seen the Cardiff press built up Keenor's importance as a local player but it also went further than this and built up Keenor's reputation with the middle classes. In a world of industrial disputes and increasing commercialism in soccer, Keenor was held up as an old-fashioned working man and footballer, committed to the community not his class or money. After Cardiff City's defeat in the 1925 FA Cup Final, Keenor said that the best team had won.<sup>31</sup> Such notions of fair play helped endear him to those who believed in 'traditional' values in sport and were emphasised by the press. In 1937, a series of articles ghost written for

Keenor stressed his commitment to such values. One article revealed that when Cardiff City players threatened to strike in 1915, because war-time restrictions endangered their right to benefit matches, Keenor had remained detached from the whole affair. He was asked by the club to raise a team in the event of a strike and said he did not even really know what the whole affair was about. Another article talked of how the club were surrounded by rumours of illicit payments during their zenith in the 1920s. This led to their books being examined regularly but no discrepancies were found and Keenor strongly denied that such practices went on at the club. He also talked of how he had been asked to pay a bribe to ensure that Cardiff City won a particular match. Being a man of such integrity he naturally declined. In the same articles, Keenor did argue against the maximum wage and admit that he had been tempted by some of the underhand inducements offered to him if joined another club.<sup>32</sup> However, he had been resilient and not accepted them, and the maximum wage remained part of the game's legislation. Thus, for those who valued the 'respectable' ideals of sport, Keenor could be looked upon as not only a good player but also an honest man, untainted by the more unsavoury aspects of the contemporary game.

Keenor stayed at Cardiff City for nineteen years. To a generation of supporters he came to embody the club, fighting on loyally for them until no longer needed. While his team-mates came and went, he remained. He also put his name to a regular column in the match programme which helped supporters develop an affinity with him. Thus, a special and lasting relationship was built up between him and the club's supporters. Keenor was certainly aware of the way he was viewed. He even used the term 'hero worship' when talking of the reception the 1927 Cup-winning side received on their return to Cardiff. Yet he remained modest with it and said he was genuinely moved by the welcome. He claimed the pride he and the two other Cardiff-born players felt was doubled.<sup>33</sup> They shared the cheering crowd's jubilation that honour had been brought to the city. When the press used Keenor as the face of the club in cartoons, they were not so much creating a new symbol but reflecting how people already saw him. Keenor's ability naturally made him a transfer target for other clubs and by 1928 financial pressures meant that Cardiff City were selling a number of their leading players. Yet Keenor stayed on until long past the peak of

his career. Had he gone it is unlikely that people would have blamed him personally. The depression meant that insecurity was a familiar fear for the people of south Wales. Just as there was popular sympathy with the men who headed north for the world of professionalism and Rugby League, Keenor's desire for greater financial reward would have been understood. Even the boxer, Tommy Farr's glamorous life in America did not lose him the support of his native Rhondda.<sup>34</sup> In a world where unemployment and poverty were rife, no one would begrudge a man who had the opportunity to escape it. Yet by staying in Cardiff and resisting the English riches on offer, Keenor ensured he remained the local hero and the popular face of Cardiff City.

By 1930, Keenor, past his best and in his mid-thirties but still earning the maximum wage, was an obvious target to be released or sold on in Cardiff City's efforts to trim its wage bill. However, being the main star of the club meant that it was difficult for the club to sell him without causing discontent amongst supporters, so Keenor was told that he would have to take a two pound a week wage-cut. The club expected him to refuse and ask for a transfer in the hope of receiving the maximum wage elsewhere.<sup>35</sup> However Keenor accepted the pay cut, probably aware that his age meant that any move would only be short lived. It was probably better to be the fading star somewhere you had a reputation, than at a new club where supporters did not fully appreciate your former glories. A player not wanted by a club was likely to have an unhappy time and the end of Keenor's career at Cardiff City saw not only internal arguments but some supporters losing patience with him. He still commanded respect but, with the team sliding down the league ladder, his old legs were increasingly becoming a liability. As early as 1929 letters had begun to be published in the press blaming Keenor for Cardiff City's declining form.<sup>36</sup> Reputations did not win matches and there was limit to the sympathy that even a hero could expect. At the end of the 1930-31 season, Keenor was released by newly relegated Cardiff City. There was no outcry nor barrage of letters demanding that he be retained. The time had come to move on for both club and player.

As Keenor went off to join Crewe Alexandra, no one emerged to take over his mantle as club hero. Throughout the 1930s Cardiff City had a rapid turnover of personnel as it looked for a winning combination. The few

talented players that were discovered by the club did not stay long as their own ambition and the club's financial situation meant they were quickly bought by leading English teams. It was a frustrating decade for Cardiff City. Despite changes in management, frequent new signings and promising starts to the season, the club remained firmly rooted in the Third Division South. With no new stars or successes to celebrate, Keenor began to take on an almost mythical status at Cardiff City. The press transformed him from being, not just the club hero he had been, but into the figurehead of a golden era that had passed away. As Cardiff City embarked on new Cup and League campaigns, the local press printed cartoons of the shadow of Keenor, a representation of past glories, looming large over Ninian Park and the current team. His instantly recognisable features, easily characterised, helped develop his new status. While society was haunted by the ghosts of a booming coal trade and a vibrant national culture, Cardiff City was haunted by the achievements of Keenor's era. It mattered not that Keenor had been obstinate, not always even in the team and towards the end of his career blamed for poor results. The press had a selective memory and the supporters needed no encouragement to swallow the message. They were not inventing a new persona for Keenor, he had been the great player the newspapers and fans said he was, but they were only remembering the good times. With a team that kept fading towards the end of the season and was incomprehensibly inconsistent, Keenor's virtues of courage, persistence and effort seemed the ideal salvation.

After leaving Cardiff City Keenor had briefly enjoyed some popularity at Crewe. In 1934 the club decided not to announce that an injury would prevent him from playing for fear of reducing the gate.<sup>37</sup> At the age of thirty-eight, he even added one final Welsh cap to his collection. He then moved on to become player-manager, first at Oswestry Town, and then at Tunbridge Wells, where he worked as a poultry farmer at the same time. He was not a success there and resigned because of disputes with his players.<sup>38</sup> His dominant personality seemed to be causing problems again. By now Keenor was suffering because of his physical commitments to the game.<sup>39</sup> He had given his all to soccer and was left battered and ill. Although being a heavy smoker cannot have helped, over twenty years of playing was taking its toll on his health. In August 1937 he was admitted to hospital, suffering from diabetes. He had been suffering from the

disease for some time but, courageous as ever, had kept it secret. The news was published in south Wales, together with the information that he had been out of work for some time, with not even the dole to support his wife and seven children. This was greeted with genuine shock and grief and an appeal was immediately launched for him. Such was Keenor's esteem that the Football Association of Wales itself ran the fund and made a donation. Cheques were sent to newspaper offices and at Cardiff City's next match, a blanket was carried around Ninian Park by former players and local theatre stars for people to throw their donations in.<sup>40</sup> The incident, together with the series of articles credited to him, served to revive affection for Keenor and he seemed to illustrate the whole plight of south Wales. Like so many who had revered him, he was now left unemployed and helpless through no fault of his own. In the gloom of the 1930s, even a symbol of former glories had fallen to the depths of despair. The hero could now be seen, not just as a symbol of a club's golden era, but of the fate of a whole society. The press continued to use him as an emblem of former glories and the knowledge of what had happened to him since made that symbolism all the more poignant.

After the Second World War, Keenor's fame subsided as a new Cardiff City team established themselves in the First Division of the Football League. Supporters and the press, finally having new heroes, no longer had to look back to past triumphs. Keenor returned to his native city in 1958 and worked as a builder's labourer. The hero had returned home. His fame and the Cup win still bought him some attention but he was now just part of the community that had once revered him. News of his death in 1972 made the front pages of the local press and revived interest in his career.<sup>41</sup> Subsequently his reputation continued to live on when people talked of the Cup win. The *Who's Who of Cardiff City players*, written in 1987, described him as 'quite simply the greatest Bluebird of all'.<sup>42</sup> Yet he is not remembered by as many, or with the same nostalgia, as Dixie Dean, Hughie Gallacher or any of the other inter-war greats. The goal-scorers and providers are remembered long after their careers end but the hard tacklers tend to die with the memories of those who saw them play. Keenor's name stands out from soccer's record books because he captained the only Welsh FA Cup winners. Had Arsenal's goalkeeper saved the weak shot that gave Cardiff City the only goal of that game, then Fred Keenor would

have been remembered today even less.

Thus Fred Keenor was a different kind of hero to the best remembered players of the inter-war years. He was not the only popular aggressive defender of the era. Every club had its hard man, appreciated by his own supporters but vilified by the opposition. There were other players who in their day were just as much heroes at their own clubs as the spectacular stars whom history remembers. Yet Keenor stands out from his contemporaries, not just because of just how good a player and leader he was, but because of what he came to represent to supporters in and around Cardiff. He was an example to all of the virtues of never giving up. In the increasingly trying circumstances of the depression, it was a lesson that was appreciated. There was a message in him for both soccer and society. By the 1930s the press had turned him into a symbol of a glorious past, and like all golden ages, it owed more to myth than reality. Cardiff City were already past their best by 1927 and during their heyday Keenor had been just one of many stars in the team. He was even rivalled by the terrier-like Billy Hardy for the position of most popular defender at the club.<sup>43</sup> But being an Englishman, Hardy could not be turned into a local figurehead to the extent Keenor was. It was not so much who players were that counted but what they meant, and Keenor meant far more than the sum of his career really deserved. His career therefore illuminates a different facet in the popularity of soccer heroes; where the sporting and economic needs of a society and the supporters who were part of it, meant that the power of symbolism could overtake the reality of fact. Keenor's own personal fall then served to reinforce this symbolism, illustrating just how deep the plight of south Wales during the depression was. He remained a symbol of past glories but also a reminder of what had happened to those triumphs. Yet beneath all this symbolism there still had to be a great player and Keenor was undoubtedly that.

## References

- 1 Ernie Curtis in Crooks, John, *Cardiff City Football Club - The Official History of The Bluebirds* (Harefield: Yore Publications, 1992), p. 151.
- 2 From the match report of Scotland v. Wales in *Daily Record & Mail*, 27 October 1930.
- 3 *Western Mail*, 23 April 1927.
- 4 In particular see Moorhouse, H. F., Shooting stars: footballers and working-class culture in twentieth-century Scotland; Smith, Dai, Focal Heroes: a Welsh fighting

- class, & Mason, T., Stanley, M., in: Richard, H. (ed.) *Sport and the Working Class in Modern Britain* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990); Mason, Tony, 'Our Stephen and Our Harold': Edwardian Footballers as Local Heroes, in: Holt, Richard, Mangan, J. A. & Lanfranchi, P. (eds.) *European Heroes: Myth, Identity, Sport* (London: Frank Cass, 1996) and Hill, J., Reading the Stars: Towards a Post-Modernist Approach to Sports History, *The Sports Historian*, 14 (1994).
- 5 *South Wales Football Echo*, 28 August 1937; *Western Mail*, 16 October 1956.
  - 6 *South Wales Football Echo*, 28 August 1937; Jenkins, Derrick, *Fred Keenor, 1894-1972*, unpublished article (1985), pp. 2, 6.
  - 7 Ernie Curtis in Crooks, 1992, p. 151.
  - 8 Although Keenor, who had also boxed somewhat unsuccessfully while in the army, didn't think he had managed to hit Driscoll once. *Western Mail*, 16 October 1956.
  - 9 Quotes from Davies, Gareth M. & Garland, Ian, *Who's Who of Welsh International Soccer Players* (Wrexham: Bridge Books, 1991), p. 118.
  - 10 Crooks, 1992, p. 151; Letter from Alan Ralph Williams to Derrick Jenkins, 20 August 1987.
  - 11 *South Wales Football Echo*, 6 November 1937.
  - 12 *South Wales Football Echo*, 9 October 1937.
  - 13 *South Wales Football Echo*, 20 November 1937.
  - 14 Quoted in Davies & Garland, 1991, p. 118.
  - 15 Because of the Football League's stance on releasing non-English players, Wales had to select a team for the match which included three amateurs and in which Keenor was the only recognised international. The press and supporters expected Wales to be crushed but they drew 1-1 with Keenor receiving much of the credit for inspiring the others.
  - 16 Letter from Alan Ralph Williams to Derrick Jenkins, 20 August 1987; *Western Mail*, 22 January 1927.
  - 17 See Holt, Richard, Heroes of the North: sport and the shaping of regional identity, in: Hill, J. & Williams, J. (eds.) *Sport and Identity in the North of England* (Keele: Keele University Press, 1996), p. 161.
  - 18 *Ibid.* pp. 139, 154-155.
  - 19 See Williams, Gareth, *1905 and all that - Essays on Rugby Football, Sport and Welsh Society* (Llandysul: Gomer Press, 1991), ch. 4.
  - 20 Keenor talked of the pride and honour of playing for Wales in *South Wales Football Echo*, 20 November 1937.
  - 21 See Johnes, Martin, *That Other Game: A Social History of Soccer in South Wales, c.1906-39*, (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Wales Cardiff, 1998 forthcoming).
  - 22 Keenor quoted in *South Wales Football Echo*, 22 September 1934.
  - 23 Moorhouse, 1990, p. 185.
  - 24 Keenor quoted in Jenkins, 1985, p. 4.
  - 25 *South Wales Echo*, 1 April 1927.
  - 26 Crichton, Chas, Football Since the War, in: Clarke, J. *et al.* (eds.) *Working Class Culture - Studies in History and Theory* (London: Hutchinson, 1979), pp. 162-168.
  - 27 Jenkins, 1985, p. 10.
  - 28 *South Wales Echo*, 3 June 1927.

- 29 *South Wales Football Echo*, 25 September 1937.
- 30 Mason, 1990, p. 76
- 31 Crooks, 1992, p. 20.
- 32 Keenor claimed that one club offered him the managership of a licensed hotel for a minimum of three years as part of a transfer deal, while another club offered him a £200 business. Such deals broke the football authorities' regulations but were an attractive offer in a business with no long term security. Keenor said the risk of being found out was too much to risk the temptation. *South Wales Football Echo*, 28 August, 11 September, 27 November, 4 December 1937.
- 33 *South Wales Football Echo*, 16 October 1937.
- 34 See Smith, 1990.
- 35 *Cardiff Post*, 8 October 1987, 8 December 1994.
- 36 For example, see *South Wales Echo*, 18 February 1929.
- 37 *South Wales Echo*, 3 February 1934.
- 38 See Keenor's statement of resignation in Tunbridge Wells Rangers F.C. *Official match programme*, 17 February 1937.
- 39 *South Wales Football Echo*, 11 September 1937.
- 40 *South Wales Echo*, 30 August, 6 September 1937. £124 was raised through a collection at Ninian Park, not a particularly big sum but nonetheless a significant gesture in a time of depression of the crowd's love of Keenor.
- 41 *South Wales Echo*, 29 October 1972.
- 42 Crooks, John, *The Bluebirds - A Who's Who of Cardiff City Football League Players* (Pontypool: published by the author, 1987), p. 73.
- 43 Billy Hardy, 'the idol of all south Wales', once appeared on a newsreel at a Cardiff Cinema and the audience was said to have cheered for ten minutes. *South Wales Echo*, 20 February 1922.