

Reserves run-out for Ferrie

FERRIE Bodde returns to action for Swansea City's reserves at West Brom today as he continues his recovery from more than three years of knee injury problems. Bodde kicked off his latest comeback attempt at Hereford a fortnight ago but then sat out last weekend's practice match with Neath.

The Dutch midfielder will play in this afternoon's behind-closed-doors game alongside Alan Tate, another who is on the way back after a long-term injury.

A number of other senior men will be involved, including Stephen Dobbie, while new boys Rory Donnelly and Darnel Situ will also feature.

Swansea Reserves: from Moreira, Alfei, Situ, Tate, Bodde, March, Dobbie, Bessone, Smith, Edwards, Donnelly, Thomas, Davies, Walsh, Elsey, Loveridge.

Clubs eye Dobbie

SWANSEA City have received inquiries for Stephen Dobbie — but are yet to receive bid for the out-of-favour striker.

Blackpool are thought to be keen on re-signing on Dobbie, who had a stint on loan at Bloomfield Road two years ago, while Bristol City have also been linked.

"We have had a few tentative inquiries about the availability of Stephen," said a Swans spokesman.

"Clubs have obviously seen that he has not played for a few weeks, but we have had no official bids from anyone and Stephen is still regarded as a vital member of Brendan Rodgers's squad."

Dobbie has struggled for game-time at the Liberty this season, and his first-team chances have not been helped by the arrivals of Josh McEachran and Gylfi Sigurdsson.

Former Swansea boss Kenny Jackett, meanwhile, has played down reports that he is poised to take Craig Beattie to Millwall after the striker left the Liberty last week.

Spurs tie switched

SWANSEA City's Premier League trip to Tottenham Hotspur has been put back a day after the game was selected for live TV coverage. Brendan Rodgers's men will now go to White Hart Lane on Sunday, April 1 (4pm).

Meanwhile, Tony Pennock's Swansea youth side could host Tottenham in the quarter-final if they can get past Manchester United in round five of the FA Youth Cup. The winners of the Swansea-United tie will host either Charlton Athletic or Spurs.



'We gave him the money

GARETH VINCENT
REPORTS

A DECADE on, Tony Petty would probably argue — as he did when he left — that he was good for Swansea City.

It was ten years ago today that a dramatic, late-night meeting at Cardiff's Copthorne Hotel ended with Petty throwing a pound's worth of loose change on the floor and relinquishing control of the club.

The Londoner who lived in Australia did not leave empty-handed — he walked away with a supermarket carrier bag stuffed with around £20,000 in cash.

"I had held meetings with him at the Vetch where he'd said he wasn't interested in selling," remembers Steve Penny, a local solicitor and now a Swansea director who was there the night Petty finally walked.

"Things suddenly changed. Eventually he said he'd had enough, that he would be leaving the country the following morning and that he would like to pass control of the club over."

"Mel Nurse's consortium gave me a figure and we negotiated a price, but he said he was not going to do the deal in Swansea."

"David Morgan and I dropped everything, we got the finances arranged and drove to Cardiff to buy the club."

Penny, of John Collins and Partners, describes the method of payment as "slightly unusual".

Saying something similar about the whole Petty reign would be unfair.

It was much more extreme than that. Petty had insisted when he took over at Vetch Field in October 2001 that he was no white knight who would pump big money into the club.

He was not lying. Instead he took the cost-cutting approach, attempting to sack seven players and slash the wages of eight others only seven days after arriving in Wales.

Within a few more days, the first meeting of the consortium which would eventually oust Petty had taken place.

At one stage Petty was offered £50,001 to leave but declined, opting instead to sell star man Stuart Roberts for just £100,000 and then getting another £100,000 bonus when Sky Sports decided to screen Swansea's FA Cup tie with Queens Park Rangers.

Petty was by now a hate figure for the fans, but Nurse's attempt



WHAT ARE YOU DOING? Swans captain Nick Cusack questioning Tony Petty.

D011010/4960/JC

TEN years ago tonight, a group of local businessmen wrestled control of Swansea City away from controversial chairman Tony Petty, beginning the revival which has led all the way to the Premier League. Here we look back on an incredible period with some of the key men involved.

to force him out by acquiring an £801,000 debt against the club and then calling it in failed in court.

Petty won that battle by claiming he had £1 million of investment lined up, but there was no sign of the cash as the players' wages were not paid over Christmas.

Captain Nick Cusack branded Swansea's owner a disgrace, yet Petty was adamant the club were better off thanks to the drastic measures he had taken as he prepared to sell up.

"He was a business person who took advantage of something which he could see could be a thriving situation for him," reckons Nurse, the former

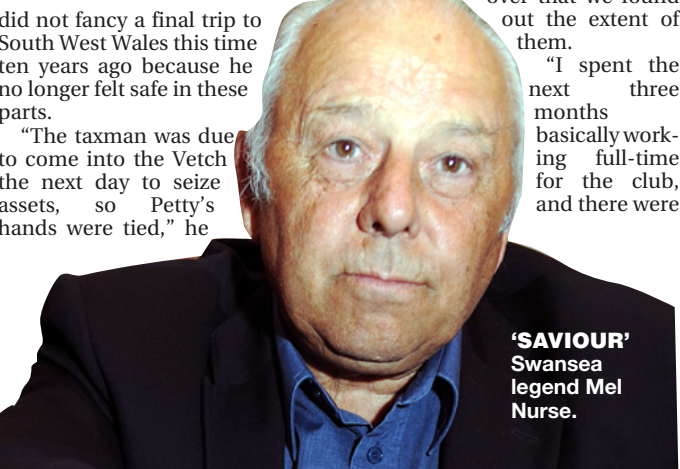
Swansea player who became the figurehead for those trying to bring Petty down.

"But we came together as a city to make sure our football club survived."

"I suppose I played a big part in that, and I am proud of what I did."

"I put my business aside and the outlay was tremendous, but I never thought about that. "I let my heart rule my head at that time, and I look back now and think about what a risk I took. Thankfully, of course, it was worth it."

Morgan, now one of Swansea's associate directors, reckons Petty



'SAVIOUR' Swansea legend Mel Nurse.

explains. "He either got something for the club by selling to us, or he ended up with nothing. A phone call came through to me and all he said was something like 'Do you want to buy a football club?'"

"It was a worrying time, because I really don't think he would have cared if he'd walked away and left no football club behind."

"The meeting that night started around 7pm. I thought we would sign here and sign there and say goodbye, but he was very difficult to deal with and it dragged on until something like 11pm."

"At the end, those of us who were there — myself, Steve, Mel and Tim Jones (Nurse's solicitor) — had a whip-round to give him the pound he had paid for the club in the first place back."

"We gave him it in loose change



HELL How the Post reported on the 2001-02 campaign.

and he just tossed it on the floor. That was his parting shot."

The following morning, as Petty flew home, Morgan, Penny and Co faced the media at the Vetch.

"We were like rabbits in the headlights," Morgan remembers.

And Penny concedes: "The press conference was an interesting experience for us."

"We knew the club had severe financial difficulties, but it was only when we took over that we found out the extent of them."

"I spent the next three months basically working full-time for the club, and there were

many others doing the same. It was a team effort, and thankfully we were able to keep professional football alive in Swansea."

"It's incredible to think that we are now a Premier League club."

A debt of around £1.7 million — minimal now, but massive then — had to be cleared by Swansea's new owners, hence the company voluntary arrangement which came that spring.

"Everybody feared for the long-term future of the club at that stage," recalls Huw Jenkins, a background figure as Petty was toppled but one who would soon become Swansea's next chairman.

"I think support for the club was at an all-time low around the city, and the first objective was to make sure we survived."

"All we were hoping for was to secure some kind of future. We were not looking any further than that."

It was a rough ride for a while — the CVA was no fun for anyone, and Swansea came

and he tossed it on floor'



Local hope Jones set for action

JUDO LIANELLI'S Fiona Jones will be one of the leading hopes for Wales at the Fighting Films Commonwealth Championships at the Wales Millennium Centre this week.

The 21-year-old competes in the senior section, with Jade Lewis of Swansea another with high hopes in the junior event.

Competition gets under way today with the Grand Masters, with the juniors in action tomorrow.

"Judo has always been strong in Wales, but not very good at selling itself," said event director Paul Williams. "When we bid for the event in Singapore in 2010 we had a vision for an event that would make a real impact."

"We hope we can make a dent in the awareness of our sport. Welsh judo has now got an excellent reputation in other countries."

Ferry's clash set for Friday

BRITON Ferry Llansawel have brought forward their home MacWhirter Welsh League division three league match with Pontyclun to Friday (7.30pm).



CLEAR MESSAGE 'You are the weakest link'. Swans fans let their feelings be known with a message for Tony Petty.

D011016/0071/JC

reaching the Premier League had he stuck around much longer. Yet perhaps the lows he dragged Swansea to played a part in inspiring the highs they are experiencing today.

"I don't know where he is now," Morgan says.

"But in a sense, he was the reason why an ugly duckling became a high-flying Swan."

"We brought a bit of common sense into the way the club was run. We realised that everything had to pay for itself, and that started us on the path to where we are now."

"I think we can all take a bit of pride from the progress we have made."

"It's not for ourselves, but for our football club and our city. People all over the world are now hearing about Swansea City."

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CHARMING Tony Petty.

extremely enthused by amount of talent on show.

Dan Clements, head of performance for Wales Rugby League, said: "It was another strong attendance. This shows the desire of young players to represent their country in rugby league and to have the opportunity to test themselves against some of the UK's finest junior players."

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Turnout 'delights' officials

WALEs Rugby League were left delighted with the turn-out at Saturday's open trial at Nantyglo where more than 100 youngsters attended.

A squad will be selected to represent Wales Schoolboys against England Youth, one at Easter and one in August.

The trial was attended by several members of staff from Wigan Warriors and they were

"All the staff have been really enthused by the effort and commitment from all the players and are keen to start their work with the squads in preparation for the coming season."

"The representatives from Wigan were also delighted at the quality levels that they witnessed. This bodes well for the future of our partnership with the Super League club."

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Davies gets player award

ABERAVON fly-half Jamie Davies has been named December's Principality Premiership Player of the Month.

The 33-year-old was nominated by Premiership coaches, members of the Welsh media and WRU elite performance staff.

Davies earned the recognition after a big input into recent wins. In 16 appearances this season, he has scored two tries and notched up 162 points, making him the highest points scorer in

Welsh league history.

Davies said: "I have had a good run of games and the points have been adding up, which is obviously pleasing."

"It's nice being one of the senior players and getting this kind of recognition."

Team manager Steve Jones added: "Jamie is a huge asset to the Aberavon team. He is consistent and that is reflected in his points record."

"I'm delighted that Jamie has been handed the award."

Lisa Perrie, Principality branch manager at Port Talbot, said: "Aberavon are holding their own in the top half of the league table and we wish them all the best for the remainder of the season."



RECOGNITION Fly-half Jamie Davies.

Evening Post At the heart of all things local [this is southwales.co.uk](http://thisissouthwales.co.uk)

WIN tickets to Swans V Chelsea

Swansea City go in search of a vital Premier League victory when they take on the mighty Chelsea at the Liberty Stadium on Tuesday the 31st January 2012.

Only Manchester United have beaten Swansea on their own patch this season, and Brendan Rodgers's men will be desperate to overcome the latest opposition.

For your chance to get your hands on tickets for the game simply answer the following question and send back your answer.

BY POST Text **SW Swans** along with your A, B or C answer including your name and post code to **65100**. Texts cost £1 plus your standard network charge and lines will close 10am on Monday 30th January 2012. Texts made after this time will not be counted but may still be charged.

WHAT IS THE NAME OF CHELSEA'S HOME GROUND?

A) Stamford Bridge
B) Stand up Bridge
C) Stand up Castle

Example Text
SW SWANS A/B/C LAURA HILL SA1 1QT

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