

Eisteddfod yr Urdd

SIR CONWY

26 – 31 Mai 2008

Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Urdd Gobaith Cymru



Datganiad i'r Wasg / Press Release

American Wrestling at Llanrwst!

15 January 2008

When local lad, Aled Lloyd came home from the Royal Air force during the Second World War with two pairs of boxing gloves, young lads at Ysbyty Ifan near Betws y Coed spent every Saturday afternoon outside the old smithy, practising and participating in boxing matches. One of those lads was Orig Williams, and there began his interest in the noble art of self defence.

“The deacons had a thing or two to say on a Sunday though,” Orig recalls with a glint in his eye, “when young lads arrived at chapel the following morning bruised and battered, nursing black eyes!”

45 years since he first began, Orig Williams will bring a super American wrestling event to Llanrwst Leisure Centre (Nebo Road) on Saturday, 26 January. Welsh speaking wrestlers, some trained by Orig, will battle it out against ex World Wrestling Entertainment guys, in head to head matches, Wales against America.

Representing Wales, **Bari Griffiths** from Porthmadog better known as ‘Ten Foot,’ **Dafydd Vaughan** from Llanynys, Vale of Clwyd and **Geraint Clwyd** from Rhyl. The three Welshmen will battle it out against three Americans in the ring during one extraordinary special wrestling event during the evening.

Welsh speaker, Bari ‘Ten Foot’ is a Carpenter by trade, and also assists the family’s Funeral Directors business at Tremadog. Having already made his mark during wrestling contests in Germany, Egypt, Austria and Ireland, Bari is ready for the challenges he faces at Llanrwst. Some of you may recall Bari, who weighs in at 21 stone and stands 6 foot 7 inches tall, on S4C’s *Cadair Fawr Eleri Siôn*, before Christmas!

(more...)

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American Wrestling at Llanrwst

During the evening's professional competitions, youngsters will be given the opportunity to try their hand at light wrestling competitions, the first for 9 to 11 year olds and the second for 12 to 14 year olds.

"I have been brought up to behave and respect my elders," explained Orig Williams, "when you are in the ring, respecting the opposition is paramount. Youngsters during these light wrestling competitions will learn self defence techniques, with their safety, at the forefront of proceedings. Two championship cups will be presented to both winners from each category during the evening, crowning each one Eisteddfod yr Urdd Sir Conwy o8 Wrestling Champions!"

Orig himself joined the RAF as a youngster, and following his two years National Service, his interest in wrestling and boxing escalated. His interest soon became an occupation as he travelled the length and breadth of the UK with the the boxing booths. Continuing and developing his own wrestling skills in the ring, he also spent many years as promoter and agent to many big wrestling names. During that time, he rubbed shoulders with the likes of Mick McManus, Giant Haystack and Jackie Pallo.

Years later, during the early 80s and with wrestling becoming a world wide professional event, assisted by large sponsorship deals and broadcasting, Orig spent twelve years working with S4C on programmes such as 'Y Cymro Cryfa' (*transl.* the strongest Welshman).

Orig concluded, "I'm sure the audience at Llanrwst will enjoy a great evenings' entertainment at the ringside, in support of their very own Welsh wrestling team."

Tickets for the evening are priced at £8 (adults) and £6 (children), and are available from Bys a Bawd, Llanrwst 01492 641329. The evening begins at 7pm on Saturday, 26 January, 2008.

Proceeds from the evening are part of the fundraising activities across Conwy to host the Urdd Gobaith Cymru National Eisteddfod Conwy 08 coming to Fferm Gloddaeth Isa, Penrhyn Bay, Llandudno from the 26 to the 31 of May. This national event attracts 100,000 people to enjoy the best youth talent from across Wales, with a host of other activities also available on the festival site itself.

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