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# Rugby rooms

*Part of an article from England Rugby magazine,  
written by Rick Morris*

Finding a bed in Cardiff on a Six Nations weekend can be a real problem and not simply because you are so befuddled that you can no longer remember which hotel you left your bags in and anyway the last time you saw Simon, who had been entrusted with everyone's keys, was as he disappeared into Blah Blah's in hot pursuit of a very tasty little blonde, muttering something over his shoulder about "just boogeying on down St Mary Street 'til dawn". How many had he had?? He's 69 and the last time he had cartilages in his knees rationing was still in force.

Seriously, folks, it's not easy to find a spare room. Lots of Welsh debenture holders – there are 17,400 of them – and English fans confident of getting tickets book their favourite places two years ahead. Researching this article in late December I drew blank after blank at everywhere from small B&Bs to the 5-star Hilton.

The options are basically these:

1. Throw yourself on the mercy of the Cardiff Visitor Centre (tel: 02920 227281) and hope they can come up trumps with something east of Swansea.
2. Set your secretary the thankless task of phoning every Cardiff hotel.
3. Tramp up and down Newport Road or Cathedral Road, knocking on the door of every last B&B and offering cash inducements to the landlady to send mother-in-law to Auntie Bronwyn's for the night or arrange sleepovers for the kids at short notice. I find that placing a tenner behind each ear as you ring the doorbell usually gets the conversation off in the right spirit.
4. Get lucky (see Creation, etc, etc, under Nightlife).
5. Sleep it off in the gutter.
6. Get a taxi back to Mayfair.
7. Buy a Winnebago.
8. Phone a friend.

But you're in luck, your fearless correspondent has tracked down a few little known and well kept secrets that may save you from spending a night huddled in a shop doorway with your Barbour pulled down over your knees and nothing but a folded copy of The Western Mail between your bum and the rising tide as towering cumulonimbus clouds, hatched in West Africa, choose Cardiff – Europe's Youngest Capital! – on which to unload approximately 25% of the Bay of Biscay – a feat hitherto unknown to the Met Office and Michael Fish (but then Michael couldn't spot a hurricane if it was blowing in his face).

Little more than five minutes from the ground is Miller's Tavern on Brook Street, an Ansell's pub and guest house tucked away on the back streets on the west bank. Not the sort of pub your mother-in-law would wax lyrical about and it has de-listed from the Tourist Office approved list – possibly for perfectly legitimate reasons.

The landlord was out when your correspondent called and I didn't get to inspect the bedlinen in intimate detail but even if it has hot and cold running cockroaches (and I hasten to assure the libel lawyers that I am only speculating wildly, the comment was prefaced by the word 'if') in my experience after a match you couldn't care less if there were elephants running up 'n' down the walls, but it'd just be nice if the ceilings stopped going round.

It has nine rooms and does B&B for £37.50 for a double room and there are bar snacks for lunch and supper. And if the Welsh win there will be endless rounds of Sospan Fach and Bread of Heaven drifting up through the rafters to lull you to sleep. Now form an orderly queue and don't all block the phone lines at once; the telephone number is: 02920 237605.

*Fin*

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