

1.10.77

BEDFORD RUGBY UNION FOOTBALL CLUB



10p

Goldington Road, Bedford.

CLUB NOTES

This afternoon we have great pleasure in welcoming Gloucester on their biennial visit to Goldington Road. Our only regret is that this important fixture should clash with England Under-23's game with France at Orrell, which deprived Gloucester of Richard Mogg (wing three-quarter) and ourselves of Ian Peck and Mark Howe. We are of course delighted that these young players should gain national recognition, even if Ian and Mark have been selected as replacements rather than first choices; and we are also delighted to see Guy Fletcher and Chris Davies back on duty.

When Gloucester were here two years ago, we won 18-10, but they scored the only try of the game. Four years ago we won by 37-15, scoring 4 tries against 2. Away from home the recent story has been different. Last year we lost by 14-35, after losing Bob Demming with injury in the first quarter of the match and Bob Wilkinson in the closing stages. Simon Ingram had replaced Bob Demming, Tod Slaughter moving to the wing berth; but there was no-one to take Bob Wilkinson's place. Although we were decisively beaten, we managed to notch up 3 tries - and one of them was a push-over (booked to David Jackson), a type of score not often credited to visitors to Kingsholm! The away game of 1974-75 was much closer (9-15), and indeed we missed through a knock-on an almost gilt-edged chance of drawing level in the last minute.

This season Gloucester are in tremendous form and have won all seven of their games to date, scoring 203 points against 51. Their victims have included Coventry at Kingsholm (27-0, a remarkable score), and Broughton Park (also 27-0) and Bristol (10-9) away. Many Bedfordians will have watched the TV version of the last of these three games, in which Gloucester gave an impressive performance though they were hard-pressed to hang on to their one-point lead in the closing minutes.

RU Midland Merit Table up to 27th September

	P	W	D	L	Points		Match points	%
					for	against		
Moseley	3	3	0	0	120	15	6	100
Northampton	2	2	0	0	44	15	4	100
Bedford	2	2	0	0	59	25	4	100
Coventry	2	2	0	0	36	21	4	100
Leicester	3	2	0	1	98	57	4	67
Rugby	4	1	0	3	23	97	2	25
Birmingham	2	0	0	2	24	45	0	-
Nottingham	4	0	0	4	30	85	0	-
Nuneaton	2	0	0	2	10	84	0	-

"PORTRAIT OF A PLAYER"

Today we publish the first of a series of "pen pictures" of players and officials of the Bedford Club. It is fitting that we should begin with Club Captain, Bob Wilkinson.

Bob Wilkinson's playing career is well known to all rugby aficionados but briefly; Robert Michael Wilkinson was born in Luton in 1951. He has been a member of the Bedford Club for almost ten years and has played for the throughout those years except when on call to Cambridge University. Bob was secretary of Cambridge University Rugby Club and won three blues. He has had many representative honours including six England caps, a large number of games for the Barbarians, including that famous one in Cardiff in 1973, and has also toured with other famous sides such as the Penguins.

Bob writes:-

"Why do I play rugby? Primarily because I have some talent for the game and have been fairly successful. There is no-one that I know who doesn't enjoy success. Of course it is not just success for its own sake but for all the other things that it entails - meeting people, travel, confidence, publicity and responsibility. However, I do also enjoy the game itself and am happy to go out onto a pitch and kick or throw a ball around. Enthusiasm for my sport is vital, if one is to be successful, Budge Rogers has an insatiable appetite for the game, a tremendous boyish enthusiasm and I am sure that some of this enthusiasm has rubbed off on me. Sadly it is usually this quality which is the first to disappear when playing at the highest level where the game is so much more professional and tense and where there is so much more at stake. Would you believe that I even find the fitness side of the game enjoyable, perhaps not very often when I'm actually training or taking a club training session, but there is a great personal satisfaction to be gained from keeping fit enough to play what is after all a very rigorous, physical game.

My trouble is that I think too much. 2nd row Forwards traditionally are not supposed to think, many don't and sometimes they have a definite advantage. If you stop to consider whether to hit someone, they will probably hit you first. Certainly rugby is a game of instant reactions and judgments rather than ponderous ones. Speed and thought and action is of the essence in all positions.

I am happy to admit that the game has been very good to me. I have met many people, made some good friends, travelled widely, kept fit and been involved in the running of both Cambridge University and Bedford Rugby Clubs. Undoubtedly rugby has brought me out of myself and made me a much more confident person, and club captaincy and the problems that go with it are quite another experience. Over the past nine seasons since I first played for Bedford, I have played at all levels, gradually progressing through school, club university, tour, trial, squad, Barbarians and finally International rugby. Each step has given me immense pleasure and expanded my experience and enabled me to take another step forward.



Bob Wilkinson at full stretch 57

PORTRAIT OF A PLAYER continued

Naturally, my main, perhaps only regret, is that I fell short of the absolute pinnacle last season when I was dropped by England and thereby spoiled any chance that I might have had of being selected for the British Lions.

Looking back however, I am not so sure that this setback was not a good thing. It gave me a chance to reassess and re-set my targets, which now must be to regain my enthusiasm for the game (which I temporarily lost last year) and to get back into that England team.

One thing that does make me very sad is that as a player I have not got more time to involve myself in the day to day running and administration of the game, both at club and higher levels. I have found that those who run the game, at all levels, tend to forget sometimes that rugby is still a players game. The game should and must evolve around the players desires and aspirations for the game and not around what the players of yesteryear think the players of today's desires and aspirations ought to be.

GLoucester RUGBY UNION FOOTBALL CLUB

Gloucester is another great name in the British Club Rugby scene. The club was founded in 1873 and from then until the present day they have been held in healthy respect by all opponents on their Fixture List.

Perhaps the most famous of the many famous players that the club has produced was Tom Voyce who won 27 England Caps as a wing forward between 1960-26. He also toured with the British side to visit South Africa in 1924 and is still considered as one of the greatest back row specialists the game has produced. Voyce went on to become President of the R.F.Y. during the 1960-61 season.

D.R. (Dai) Gent who, having failed to displace the 35 times capped R. M. Owen as the Welsh Scrum Half, joined Gloucester and went on to become England's regular choice in that position. Four players, other than the regular supply of internationals, are particularly popular in Gloucester's history, George Thomas, Peter Butler, Don Meadows and W.E. Jones, the drop kicking legend.

In 1973-74 season Butler scored a total of 574 points. Gloucester play in Red and White hooped jerseys, stockings and white shorts, at the famous Kingsholm ground in Gloucester.

MATCH 1st OCTOBER 1977

ENGLAND UNDER 23 SQUAD

Fellow players, committee and members of the Bedford Club would like to take this opportunity of congratulating two of its younger players, Hooker, Mark Howe and Scrum Half Ian Peck on their selection for the England Under 23 Squad to play France Under 23 at Onell today.

Although both are listed as travelling reserves, time is very much on their side as both are still only 19 years of age. Good Luck lads.

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Today's Teams

Saturday, 1st October, 1977

This game is sponsored by M.J.KEMBLE & CO. LTD. see advert.

BEDFORD

15 * A.M. JORDEN
14 R. DEMMING
13 I. VINTER
12 N. CHINNECK
11 * D.M. WYATT
10 N. BREAKY
9 G. FLETCHER
1 C. BAILWARD
2 C. DAVIES
3 K. CAIRNS
4 C. HOOKER
5 * R.M. WILKINSON (Capt.)
6 F. EDWARDS
8 D. JACKSON
7 A. HOLLINS
Rep. R. RENDELL

GLOUCESTER

R. ETHERIDGE 15
R. CLEWES 14
D. POYNTON 13
B. VINE 12
P. WILLIAMS 11
C. WILLIAMS * 10
P. KINGSTON * 9
P. BLAKEWAY 1
F. REED 2
M. BURTON * 3
J. HALL 4
J. FIDLER 5
(Capt.) J. WATKINS * 6
E. PINKNEY 8
J. HAINES 7
S. MILLS Rep.
S. CORRIEA

Referee: C.HOSKINS
(London Society)

* Internationals

Next Home Game

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