

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, JANUARY 5, 1985

CUP FINAL CALLED OFF AGAIN

RUGBY CLUB'S PITCH BATTLE

The Flowers County Rugby Cup final, due to have been played at Kingsholm on Tuesday night, has been called off for a second time.

Forest of Dean club Berry Hill were due to have met Gloucester's Coney Hill team in the final, but the Kingsholm pitch has been declared unfit.

Gloucester club secretary Mr. Terry Tandy said the playing surface was in the worst condition he had ever known. Today's match against London Scottish has been ruled out and the club is already looking for an alternative pitch for next weekend's Gloucester United's fixture against Leicester Extras.

The County Cup final was originally scheduled for Kingsholm on December 11, but was called off an hour before kick-off with thick fog shrouding the ground.

Players from both sides have to face building themselves up for a third time – the game will now take place at Kingsholm later in the season.

Officials have ruled out the possibility of switching the match to another venue.

EXPERTS

Mr. Tandy said club officials were becoming increasingly concerned about the Kingsholm pitch and intended calling in soil experts for advice.

"The problem is that it does not seem to drain as easily as it used to. We are aiming to get some expert advice and then work on the surface during the close season," he said.

He added that the pitch was overplayed, with twice-weekly sessions, first-team and reserve matches, plus other representative games during the season.

He revealed that the club was now seeking a pitch elsewhere in the City for training purposes.

"If we can find a pitch somewhere where we can erect lights, it would give the Kingsholm surface more of a chance to recover from game to game."

Mr. Tandy said the club's priority at the moment was the John Player Cup with Richmond at the end of the month. All efforts would be made to ensure that went ahead.

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