

GLOUCESTER RUGBY
HERITAGE

www.gloucester rugbyheritage.org.uk

MATCHDAY PROGRAMMES

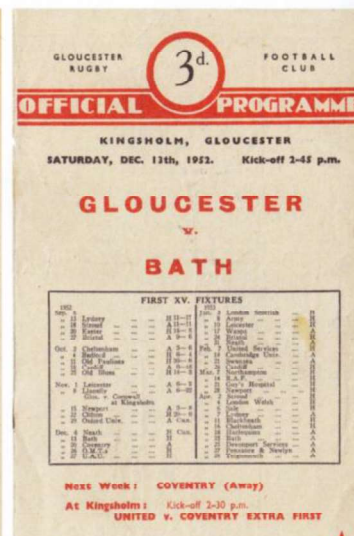
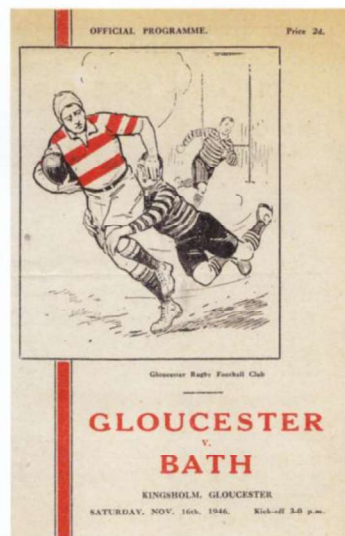
THE Gloucester Rugby Heritage Project's website currently holds something in the region of 1600 Gloucester programmes dating from about 1900 to 2001/02 - and we're actively working on the later years.

As we've been scanning and uploading we've noticed the dramatic change in style and format - and what better to illustrate this today than to take a look at the front covers of Glaws v. Bath programmes?

The earliest programme we have for matches between the two sides is dated 16 November 1946. It's a single folded sheet, showing the two teams, with just ten scant lines of notes, information on how Gloucester Rugby Club members can apply for international tickets (at 10/- a pop), and a list of First XV fixtures for the season with the results to date.

Six years later the design had changed, the fixtures and results appeared on the front cover, and there was almost a full page of notes.

The programme for 8 February 1958 carried a comment on the



(Left): 16 Nov 1946 Right): 13 Dec 1952

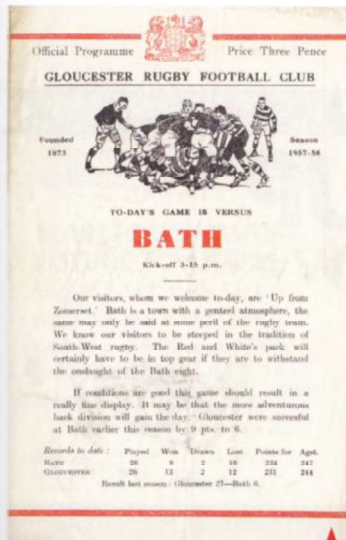
front page that "Bath is a town with a genteel atmosphere, the same may only be said at some peril of the rugby team."

It reminded supporters that all profits from sales of the programme went towards the Memorial Ground Fund, and furthermore that tea and sandwiches were available in the Club Room after the match.

The 1958/59 season saw the

arrival of a cover design which continued in use right through to 1973/74, and the programme for the match against Bath on 13 December 1958 was distinctly more chatty than had previously been the case.

It included an apology for an earlier error regarding Peter Ford's playing career, where it had been stated that he had played for the



8 Feb 1958

RAF "during the last war", and which had led to many enquiries as to just how old he was.

The club rapidly withdrew the "during the last war" comment. The cover design was cleverly augmented for floodlit matches, as for the one against Bath on 7 February 1969.

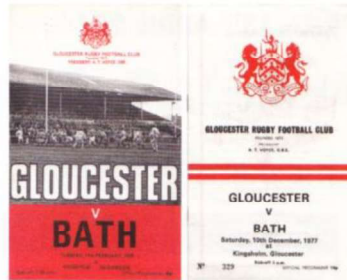


(Left): 13 Dec 1958 (Right): 7 Feb 1969

The 1975/76 season finally saw the end of this long-running cover,

and the programme for the match against Bath on 17 February 1976 displayed a new cover featuring, for the first time, a monochrome photograph.

This design lasted for a couple of seasons before being replaced by the design seen for the match on 10 December 1977.



There then followed a regular change of design for the remainder of the amateur era, gradually introducing a limited amount of colour.

Full colour programmes arrived when the game went professional in 1996, when we were introduced to the "First Division Rugby Promag", a production of English Rugby First Division Ltd and containing both syndicated articles and local contributions.

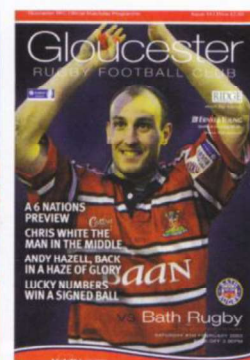
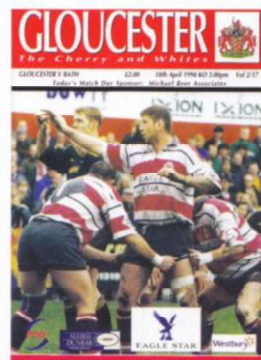
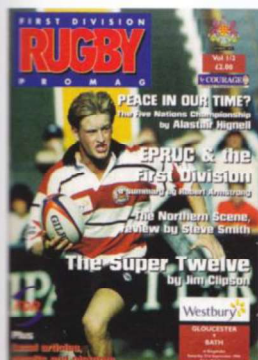
The cover format was the same for all clubs, although the cover photographs differed. This lasted for just one season before the clubs all went their separate ways again and the present programme style was introduced, gradually increasing in size until we reach the 82 page full colour glossy magazine we see today, packed full of information - and advertisements.

But adverts are by no means a new concept, as they appear in the c. 1900 programme - no doubt providing a useful source of funds for the club, supplementing the income from the programme cover price.

Space doesn't allow us to take a look back at the many contributors to the programmes over the years, but a special mention should go to Arthur Russell, who produced his "Kingsholm Kackle" from 1965/66 until 1979/80, and to Peter Arnold whose notes first appeared in 1980/81 and who was still writing his column in 2012/13.

PROGRAMME PRICE OVER THE YEARS

c. 1900 - 1930s	1d (<½p)
1946-47	2d (<1p)
1947 - mid-60s	3d (>1p)
1965-71	6d (2½p)
1971-74	3p
1974-76	5p
1976-78	6p
1978-81	10p
1981-83	15p
1983-87	20p
1987-89	30p
1989-90	40p
1990-91	50p
1991-92	80p
1992-96	£1
1996-2001	£2
2001-05	£2.50
2005-2014	£3



(L - R): 21 Sep 1996, 18 Apr 1998, 4 May 2002, 8 Feb 2003