

GLOUCESTER RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS 1901-1912

These AGMs are recorded at one end and committee meetings at the other. The AGM records consist of a newspaper cutting from the Gloucester Citizen recording the meeting in detail and a copy of the Club accounts for the previous season.

Pasted into the inside cover are the rules of the Club.

AGM June 1901

Held at Northgate Mansions and chaired by H J Boughton, President.

The profit from the 1900-01 season was £137-17-10, there was a cash balance from the previous season of £41-6-2, and subscriptions from the Rugby Union and others of £53-8-0, making a total balance of £232-12-0.

Income included members subscriptions £248-13-0, gate receipts for first team £402-17-6 and second team £55-15-1, hire of field £40, guarantee from Northampton £20, and interest on 670 shares in Ground Company £33-10-0.

Expenditures include rent of ground £275, expenses to out matches ££238-15-9 and home matches £50-4-6, insurance of teams £68-18-0, balls and kit £58-7-2, Secretary's salary £35, Treasurer's salary £20, share of gates to other clubs £66-12-10, trainer's salaries £37-7-0, gifts to local clubs in cup matches £16-10-0, referee's expenses £24-6-0, and baths and dressing rooms £31-12-2.

A capital account was shown on the balance sheet for the first time. The Club held 670 shares in the Ground Company, which cost £669-17-6, and there was an overdraft at the bank of £331-2-2, so the balance of assets over liabilities was £338-15-4. Three gentlemen had come forward to guarantee the overdraft – C H Dancey, H W Grimes and C E Brown.

H J Boughton was re-elected as President. The players had re-elected George Romans as Captain, and the meeting concurred. G Barnes was elected Captain of the A team. Re-elected were H W Grimes as Hon Secretary, C H Dancey as Treasurer and S W Bingle as Secretary. Elected to the General Committee were C E Brown, E T Huggins, J Gurney, C Williams, H A Dancey, H G Brown, S Davis, R A Roberts, A Grey, A Kiddle and E Birmingham. The players elected R Goddard as their representative on the Committee. C E Brown, Gurney, Williams and Huggins were re-elected to the Selection Committee. R J Vallender and J Phelps were re-elected as Auditors.

After much discussion and disagreement, three matches were starred for the following season – Newport, Cardiff and Bristol – for which members would have to pay for entry, in an attempt to liquidate the debt resulting from the England v Wales match played at Kingsholm in January 1900.

Walter Taylor was made a life member of the Club.

Donations were made – 5 gns to the Infirmary and 2 gns to the Ambulance Association.

Sorrow was expressed at the death of Private A Spence in South Africa [Alec Spence made 8 appearances 1897-1901].

AGM June 1902

A W Vears was voted to chair. A new Club President was needed following the death of H J Boughton, and C E Brown was elected and took the chair.

The balance sheet showed a profit on the 1901-02 season of £9-3-5. Receipts of £1322-11-11 included members subscriptions £250-12-6, gate receipts £934-19-6, hire of field £50, guarantee from Plymouth £30, interest on 670 shares in Ground Company £33-10-0, from County Union for hire of ground for last four matches £19-9-0. Expenditure of £1313-8-6 included rent of ground £275, expenses to out matches £257-16-1 and to home matches £60-8-1, insurance of teams £60-10-0, balls and kit £67-9-4, referees expenses £25-7-0, Secretary and Treasurer salaries £55, entertaining teams £15-2-6, share of gates to other clubs £135-3-0, trainers salaries £36-15-0, share of local rates £32-10-0.

In the capital account, the overdraft at the bank was £323-10-9, but the shares in the Ground Company gave a balance of assets over liabilities of £346-6-9.

George Romans was re-elected as captain of the first team and George Barnes of the A team. Officers re-elected were H W Grimes Hon Secretary, C H Dancey Treasurer, S W Bingle Secretary. 35 of the 37 fixtures for the next season had been fixed including four against Bristol (good earners), Blackheath who had requested the fixture for the first time, and a first visit to Kingsholm by Cambridge University. Lydney were given a first team fixture on condition that they continued to honour two fixtures against Gloucester A, but when they cancelled these the first team fixture was also cancelled. No matches were started, but it was hoped that members would pay for entry to the Cambridge University match on a Monday.

The Boughton Memorial Fund had reached £320.

There were 17 candidates for 11 seats on the Committee; elected were W H Taylor, A W Vears, E T Huggins, G Williams, H G Brown, RA Roberts, H A Dancey, E Birmingham, A Grey, A Kiddle and W J Vance. Elected to the Selection Committee were C E Brown, Huggins, Williams and Taylor.

The usual donations were voted – 5gns to the Infirmary and 2gns to the Ambulance Association. R J Vallender and J Phelps were re-elected as auditors

AGM May 1903

Held at Northgate Mansions with the President, C E Brown in the chair. The minutes of the last meeting as reported in the Citizen were taken as read.

The balance sheet showed a profit of £33-16-11. Receipts were £1185-3-3 and expenditure was £1151-6-4. Income included members subscriptions £229-0-6, hire of field £38, gate receipts £833-15-3, guarantees £50 and interest on 670 Ground Company shares £33-10-0. Expenditures included rent of ground and share of rates £309-8-5, rent of office £15,

expenses to out matches £259-13-8 and to home matches £42-6-0, insurance of teams £65-5-0, balls and kit £53-17-1, Secretary salary £35, Treasurer salary £20, share of gates to other clubs £97, trainers salaries £37-2-6 and gifts to local teams (West End, Gordon League, Barnwood, Hucclecote and Matson) £21.

In the capital account the overdraft at the bank had reduced to £289-13-10, and the 670 shares held in the Ground Company gave a balance of assets over liabilities of £380-3-8.

Officers re-elected were C E Brown President, H W Grimes Hon Secretary, C H Dancey Treasurer, S W Bingle Secretary.

The team was assessed to be strong forward, but weak at half-back and three-quarter. 34 fixtures had been arranged for next season, including Blackheath and Richmond at Kingsholm and a resumption of fixtures against Devon Albion. There was discussion of fixtures on Easter Monday, which had been dropped because second-rate opponents had demanded a guarantee, which resulted in a financial loss.

George Romans was elected captain of the first team for the fourth year in succession, and F Oswell captain of the A team. There were 18 nominations for the Committee and the following were elected – W H Taylor, A W Vears, E T Huggins, H G Brown, C Williams, R A Roberts, H Carter, H M Taynton, T B Powell, H A Dancey, W Rasbach. George Smith became the players representative, and the Selection Committee was Taylor, Huggins, Williams and T B Powell.

The City High Sheriff, Ald Baker, was thanked for providing shield and medals for the Junior League, who thanked the Club for their support. The usual donations were made to the Infirmary 5gns and the Ambulance Association 2gns. R J Vallender and J Phelps were re-elected as auditors.

AGM June 1904

Held at Northgate Mansions, chaired by C E Brown.

The balance sheet showed a profit of £85-12-1, with receipts amounting to £1208-5-11 and expenditure to £1151-6-4. Chief sources of income were members subscriptions £244-18-0, gate receipts £857-13-11, guarantees ££32-10-0, interest on shares £33-10-0. The best gate of the season was Cheltenham £86, followed by London Welsh £73, Old Merchant Taylors ££70, Swansea £66, Leicester £58, Bristol £100 (two matches), Cardiff £49 and Devon Albion £43. Principal items of expenditure were rent of ground £275, share of rates £33-9-8, rent of office £15, expenses to out matches £25-13-5 and to home matches £59-19-4, insurance of teams £64-10-0, balls and kit £44-2-6, referees expenses £20-5-0, printing and stationery £23-14-0, baths and dressing rooms £28-15-5, secretary salary £35, treasurer salary £20, share of gate to other clubs £55, challenge cup and medals £13-4-0, trainers salaries £35-16-6, gifts to local clubs £21.

The capital account showed that the overdraft at the bank had been reduced to £204-1-9, and the net balance of assets over liabilities was £465-15-9. It was hoped that the deficit from the international match would be wiped off in the next two years. Two matches played at Kingsholm in aid of the Infirmary raised £81-14-9.

C E Brown was re-elected as President and George Romans as captain of the first team. D Gent and T Leonard had been recruited from Cheltenham Training College to play next season. Nigel D Haines was elected as Hon Secretary, T B Powell as Treasurer and S W Bingle as Secretary. Elected to the Committee were W H Taylor, A W Vears, H G Brown, E T Huggins, H M Taynton, H A Dancey, H Carter, T B Powell, R A Roberts, W H Rasbatch, A F Hughes. Elected to the Selection Committee were Huggins, Taylor, Powell and H G Brown. W Johns was the players representative.

The rules were altered to allow life vice-presidents to be elected annually, in order to recognise in this way the services of Grimes and Dancey, retiring Hon Sec and Treasurer, whilst retaining them as committee members.

Three dates having to be kept open next season for the new County Cup, Blackheath and Richmond had dropped off the fixture list, but home and away matches with London Welsh had been arranged, and a new fixture with United Services (Portsmouth). As a result of a misunderstanding there would be no matches against Newport.

J Phelps and Austin James were elected as auditors. The usual donations were made to the Infirmary 5gns and Ambulance Association 2gns. Aitkin thanked the Club and Cardiff for the charity match at Kingsholm and offered an entertainment for members during the winter.

W H Taylor and A H Click were recommended to the Committee for life membership.

AGM June 1905

Held at Northgate Mansions, C E Brown presiding.

There was a profit on the last season of £180-0-3. Receipts were £1377-16-10 and expenditures £1197-16-7. Income included members subscriptions £265-10-0, hire of field £36, gate receipts £1036-1-6, interest on shares £33-10-0. Expenditures included rent of ground £275, expenses for out matches £247-14-9 and home matches £62-2-6, baths and dressing rooms £36-15-8, insurance of teams £60, balls and kit £122-12-3, Secretary salary £35, Treasurer salary £20, trainers salaries £35-10-6, share of gates to other clubs £62, donations to Infirmary 5gns and Ambulance Association 2 gns, and gifts to local clubs £21.

The overdraft had been reduced to £24-1-6, and the Club's 670 shares in the Ground Company valued at £669-17-7 left a positive balance of £645-16-0.

The kit expenditure included £40 on outfits for seven school teams and blazers for the team to celebrate winning the County Cup.

All retiring officers were re-elected – President C E Brown, Vice-Presidents H W Grimes and C H Dancey, Secretary S W Bingle, Treasurer W H Worth, Hon Secretary Nigel D Haines, Captain First team W Johns, Captain A team F Pyart. Elected to the Committee were W H Taylor, A W Vears, E T Huggins, W H Rasbatch, C Williams, H A Dancey, T B Powell, R A Roberts, C Hall, J Little, A F Hughes. G Vears was players representative. The Match [Selection] Committee were W H Taylor, E T Huggins, C Hall and C Williams.

A motion was passed “That in the opinion of this meeting the Committee had acted judiciously in deciding to ask the Ground Company to erect a gymnasium and training

quarters and take them at an additional rental of £100 per annum". There were some reservations about the size of the rent, but there would be some savings, and the Ground Company was spending £1100 on the building. The next priority would be covered stands for the sixpenny side.

C Hall was recommended to the Committee for election as a life member of the Club.

AGM July 1906

Held for the first time in "the spacious gymnasium on the ground at Kingsholm" presided over by C E Brown.

The financial statement showed a balance of £100-6-11 on the season, with income of £1476-9-3 and expenditure of £1376-2-4. The Club held 910 shares in the Ground Company, which represented £913-19-6 at actual cost. After deducting the overdraft of £167-16-7, the actual balance in favour of the Club was £745-2-11. Membership had increased from 900 to 1300, bringing in £111 extra in subscriptions; gate receipts were about £10 less. Expenditures included £100 rent for the gymnasium. A new scheme had been introduced instead of the Cup Competition for local clubs, whereby Gloucester FC paid the rents of grounds of the various local clubs and also made a grant to their funds in return for the services of players when required. The profit on the New Zealand match was c£150.

Officers elected – President C E Brown, Vice-Presidents C H Dancey and H W Grimes, Captain D R Gent, Captain A team H Smith, Hon Secretary Nigel D Haines, Secretary S W Bingle, Treasurer Walter H Worth. Elected to the General Committee – W H Taylor, A W Vears, C Williams, W H Rasbach, T Huggins, C Hall, F W Lovesy, J T Brooks, E J Little, H A Dancey, G Bland. Selection Committee – C Hall, Huggins, Taylor, Williams.

A resolution was passed unanimously "That this meeting do direct the Committee not to enter the Club for the county cup competition for the season 1907-08". There was strong feeling against cup rugby as "not the game they wished to cultivate", but the Club had already been entered for the 1906-07 competition and the Club would look unsportsmanlike if withdrawing after they had lost the cup.

There was concern about the standard of refereeing and the matter would be taken up with the County Union.

The usual donations were made of 5gns to the Infirmary and 2gns to the Ambulance Brigade.

AGM July 1907

Held in the Club gymnasium at Kingsholm, C E Brown presiding. There was a loss on the season of £290-12-1. At the outset of the season the Club had been penalised by the County Union for some irregularity at the cup final the previous year and this caused a pronounced decline in the membership from 1300 to 800, a loss of £135 in subscriptions. Gate receipts were also down. Other events were held to improve income and expenditures had been reduced by £35.

Officers elected – President C E Brown, Vice-Presidents H W Grimes and C H Dancey, Captain First team G Vears, Captain A team F Arthur, Hon Secretary Nigel D Haines, Treasurer W H Worth, Secretary H G Brown (S W Bingle having resigned). Elected to Committee – S W Bingle, A W Vears, L Vears, J T Brookes, E T Huggins, C Williams, H M Taynton, G Bland, J Little, Rev O E Hayden, H A Dancey. A Hudson the players representative. Selection Committee – C Williams, E T Huggins, L Vears, J T Brookes.

The proposed formation of a league for the first class clubs in the county was discussed, and the Committee was instructed not to join a league if one was formed.

James Phelps and A E James were re-elected as auditors.

There was concern over the fixture list for the A team and the migration of players to other clubs.

The usual donations were made of 5gns to the Infirmary and 2gns to the Ambulance Association.

Recommendation were made to the Committee that C Hall should be given life membership, and that 1s 6d season tickets be issued to schoolboys.

AGM June 1908

Held at Kingsholm, presided over by C E Brown and attended by E S Bostock-Smith, President of the County Union.

There was a loss of £58-8-3 on the season, although membership had increased from 803 to 1,000, and gates increased by £200. Some regarded the rent paid to the Ground Company to be too great a burden.

Officers elected – President C E Brown, Vice-Presidents H W Grimes and C H Dancey, Hon Secretary D Nigel Haines, Treasurer W H Worth, Secretary H G Brown, Captain First team A Hudson, Captain A team A Hawker, Auditors J Phelps and A E James. Elected to the General Committee – L Vears, A W Vears, J T Brookes, Rev O E Hayden, E T Huggins, J J Little, W H Rasbach, H A Harris, H M Taynton, G Bland, A C Williams. W Johns players representative. Selection Committee – L Vears, Huggins, Williams, Hayden.

The policy of not entering county cup or league competitions was reviewed, and a resolution was passed that the club should join these competitions in 1909-10; members would have to pay for admission.

£47 had been raised as a testimonial for “Whacker” Smith on his retirement as a player and he was presented with a watch and gold chain; the Committee were recommended to give him life membership.

The electric light failed in the latter part of the meeting, which was conducted with some difficulty.

AGM June 1909

Held at Kingsholm, presided over by C E Brown.

There was a loss on the season of £1-15-7, with income of £1338-9-7, including a grant of £40 from the Ground Company, and expenditure of £1340-5-1. Receipts included members subscriptions £301-12-0, gate receipts £900-14-7, interest on 1,011 shares in the Ground Company £50-11, Conty Union hire of ground for two matches £26-10-0. Expenditures included rent of ground £375, share of local rates £47-8-8, expenses to out matches £214-4-6 and home matches £74-1-8, insurance of teams £65-15-6, balls jerseys etc £55-14-10, secretary and treasurer salaries £55, shares of gates to other clubs £177, trainers salaries £35-16-6, gift to local clubs £21-3-1 and to schools clubs £15.

The capital account showed an overdraft of £622-2-5, but the Ground Company shares were valued at cost of £1017-9-6. The Ground Company had not only made the grant of £40, but agreed to reduce the rent to £325

There were complaints about matches kicking off late, the A team match on Boxing Day delayed by the players demanding a present or Christmas box, which the Committee refused.

Officials elected – President C E Brown, Vice-Presidents H W Grimes and C H Dancey, and E T Huggins was recommended to the Committee for election, Hon Secretary Nigel D Haines (to be assisted by L Vears), Treasurer W H Worth, Secretary H G Brown, Captain First team A Hudson (nominated by the players, but could not yet accept the post because of serious illness), Captain A team W Egerton. Elected to Committee – A F Fielding, L Vears, G Romans, Rev O E Hayden, A C Williams, H M Taynton, J T Brookes, W H Rasbach, A W Vears, J J Little, G H Bland. W Johns was the players representative. A rule changed was approved to leave the choice of Selection Committee to the Executive Committee rather than the AGM, with power to co-opt a player of recent date.

A motion proposing that the club should withdraw from the County Cup Competition was lost. A collection had raised £15 for a presentation to Bert Parham on his retirement from active football. G Romans and B Parham were recommended to the Committee for life membership of the Club.

AGM May 1910

Held at Kingsholm, presided over by C E Brown, and attended by E Bostock Smith, the County's representative on the Rugby Union, who had become a member of the Club.

The Club had made a profit on the season of £33-4-11.

Election of officers – President C E Brown, Vice-Presidents H W Grimes, C H Dancey and E T Huggins. Captain First XV A Hudson, Captain A team F Pegler, Hon Secretary Nigel D Haines, Secretary H G Brown, Treasurer W H Worth. Elected to Committee – J Hanman, G Romans, C J Woolf, A C Williams, A F Fielding, W H Rasbach, H M Taynton, A W Vears, J T Brookes, Rev O E Hayden, C J Hall. Players representative – H Berry.

A Hudson asked members to do what they could to discourage loose remarks made from the touch-line towards the players. The Chairman presented gold medals and photographs of the

Gloucestershire team to the City players who took part in the final for the County Championship against Yorkshire, and First and Second team players received a photograph of their respective teams. W Walwin had presented to the Club a couple of photographs of the game against Yorkshire.

A rule change was agreed to appoint a Match Secretary to arrange fixtures. There was acknowledgement kick-offs later than the advertised time continued to be a problem- the Committee had instructed captains to take the field and not wait for absent players. Eric Keys had received an offer for the schools international trial to be played at Kingsholm next season – it was agreed that the ground should be granted free and that members pay admission.

A Hawker was recommended to the Committee for life membership.

AGM June 1911

Held at Kingsholm, presided over by C E Brown.

The balance sheet showed receipts to be £1,202-18-2, the chief items being subscriptions £295-1-0, gate receipts £848-10-7 (down because two games less than previous season), interest of 1,011 shares in Ground Company £25-5-6. Chief expenditures were rent of ground £325, rates £46-2-10, expenses to out matches £251-2-8 and home matches £62-18-2, share of gates to other clubs £73, showing a gain on the season of £47-9-3.

The capital account showed a reduction in the overdraft to £541-8-3, the main asset being the 1,011 shares in GFAG valued at £1,017-9-6.

Officers elected – President C E Brown, Vice-Presidents H W Grimes and E T Huggins and Nigel D Haines for Mr Dancey resigned, Hon Secretary J T Brookes, Treasurer Mr Worth, Secretary H G Brown. Elected to Committee – P M Chance, A F Fielding, J Hanman, C J Hall, A L Lane, G Leaver, W H Rasbach, G Romans, A W Vears, A C Williams C J Woolf. Players representative H Berry. Captain First team A Hudson and Vice-Captain Gordon Vears, Captain 2nd XV W Blackford.

There was pleasure that home and away fixtures against Devon Albion and London Welsh had been arranged for next season, as well as matches against Oxford University and Watsonians, but disappointment that Harlequins had not accepted a fixture. A proposal that matches should not be played on Good Friday met with little support. The second team fixture list had been increased with disappointing results, but the Committee recognised the value of the second team and were determined to do all they could to foster local football.

Over £70 had been collected for a testimonial to Jimmy Stephens, who had played 325 games for the City and 28 for the County, and the Committee were recommended to make him a life member.

AGM June 1912

Held in the gymnasium at Kingsholm, with C E Brown in the chair.

The balance sheet showed a loss on the last season of £76-11-3, but the Ground Company made an allowance of £75 out of rent, reducing the deficit to £1-11-3. Total receipts were £1,193-3-9, the chief items being subscriptions £348-17-6, hire of field £14-10-0, hire of rooms 10s-0d, gate receipts £788-1-0. Principle expenditures were rent of ground £325, rates £45-1-2, expenses to out matches £285-16-7 and to home matches £66-1-6, advertisements £20-12-0, printing and stationery £30-6-11, insurance of teams £40-4-9, balls and kit £50-5-8, referees expenses £23-9-0, doctor and chemist accounts £18-12-5, Secretary salary £35, Treasurer salary £20, share of gates to other clubs £103-2-2, trainers salaries £35-16-6, police charges £18-13-6, gifts to local clubs £19-8-0, and loss on French tour £7-0-9.

The capital account showed an overdraft at the bank of £542-19-6, but the GFAG shares were valued at 1,017-9-6, and other assets were office furniture, fittings, clothing, etc valued at £45. Problems during the season were the loss of two matches, the extra costs of travelling during the coal strike, guarantees to other clubs going up with the Lydney club falling through and their dates being filled by clubs requiring guarantees. There would be further negotiation with the Ground Company over the level of rent and the repayment of the £75.

Officers elected – President C E Brown, Vice-Presidents H W Grimes, Nigel D Haines and E T Huggins, Captain First team A Hudson, Captain A team F Bloxsome, Hon Secretary J T Brookes, Secretary H G Brown, Treasurer W H Worth.

When it came to electing the Committee, Mr Lane wanted to make a speech critical of another candidate, Mr Gleave, but the President ruled that electioneering was not allowed. Mr Lane threatened to resign if free speech were not allowed and Mr Hanman (chairman of the old committee) and Mr Fielding said they would also resign. Accusations of members being bad sports were being bandied about. A resolution to adjourn the meeting was defeated and voting proceeded. Elected were J Hanman, A C Williams, G Romans, C J Hall, W H Rasbach, A F Fielding, C J Woolf, A E Gleave, A W Vears, A Lionel Lane, P M Chance. F Pegler was elected as players representative. Mr Lane repeated that he did not accept his election and declared that the whole proceedings were invalid because Club rules had been broken by non-members voting. The Chairman insisted that the meeting had been conducted in the same way as every other meeting. “The meeting then closed amidst general excitement, the supporters of Mr Gleave giving vent to their delight at his success at the poll by cheering. He had the active support of several players.”