

# Learning Zone



## Gloucester Rugby Timeline



### Coaching developments

The setting up of a "Training" sub-Committee, a "coaching awards" scheme for players and the introduction of "tactical" talks after the Tuesday training nights had been suggested and tried during the 1930s and 1940s. However, it appears that Don Rutherford's contribution to the development of coaching at Gloucester was substantial. During the 1966/7 season, he arranged practical and theoretical coaching sessions, continuing this work through his tenure as Captain of the club in the following season. Rutherford later went on to become the RFU's full-time Technical Advisor.



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### More coaching developments

In 1972, the committee made its first formal coaching appointment, on an "honorary" basis, to Mike Booth, three times Captain of the club during the early 1960s. By the 1976 AGM, the choice of coach was decided by the players and approved at the AGM to enable the appointee to take up a place on the General Committee. Coaching duties, in what was described by the Citizen as a "coaching revolution" at Gloucester, were divided along functional lines at this time, with Mike Booth taking responsibility for the backs and Mike Nicholls, another former Captain of the club, developing the forwards (Citizen 27.12.1975, GRFC Minutes 3.5.1976).

These two "internal" appointments reinforced what had been a successful style of play at Gloucester during the early-1970s, involving heavy reliance on a dominant pack of forwards, backed by the prodigious goal-kicking of the Full-Back Peter Butler. Although attempts were made by Rutherford to develop greater use of the backs, cultural resistance to

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Help

**More coaching developments**

change was too powerful at the time to achieve such a break with tradition. Mike Burton, Club Captain in 1975/6 suggests that:

King Canute was an odds-on favourite compared to Rutherford's chances. He tried but couldn't to it. There were too many old dogs sniffing around, too set in their ways to be taught a whole load of fancy tricks like running and passing (Rugby World, May 1982).

(NB. Rutherford played for the British Lions against Australia)

1975 1980 1985 1990 1995

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Help

**Coaching assistant required – or not**

In 1990, Keith Richardson, the club's coach, presented a paper to the Management Committee detailing a perceived need to reorganise the playing side of the club. The increasingly competitive environment of club rugby required, he suggested, a greater attention to be paid to the fitness and coaching of players. He suggested the creation of an unpaid post of Team Manager to assist with administrative details associated with the senior team, and the employment of "a gentleman to help with kit, balls etc on training nights."

His recommendations met with little response.

1980 1985 1990 1995 2000

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