

COUNTY RUGBY FOOTBALL MATCH



GLoucestershire Rugby Football Union



EASTERN COUNTIES

GLOUCESTERSHIRE
v.
EASTERN COUNTIES

English Counties Semi-Final



At THE MEMORIAL GROUND, BRISTOL

On SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7th, 1948

Kick-off 3.0 p.m.



Official Programme - - Price 3d.

Teams

Gloucestershire Colour : Blue		Eastern Counties Colours : White	
1 W. Hook Gloucester	Backs	H. E. R. Chew London Hospital	15
2 G. E. Green Bristol	Three-qts. R.W. L.W.	D. Marrack London Hospital	11
3 J. C. Morgans Lydney	R.C. L.C.	P. J. Langley Ipswich & Oxford Greyhounds	12
4 K. Daniell Gloucester	L.C. R.C.	P. F. Hepburn Woodford	13
5 J. V. Smith Stroud	L.W. R.W.	G. Rowlands London Hospital	14
6 W. E. Jones Gloucester	Fly Half	V. G. J. Harrison London Welsh	10
7 D. D. Evans Gloucester	Scrum Half	P. W. Sykes Wasps	9
8 G. A. Gibbs (Capt.) Bristol	Forwards	R. A. Huskisson Old Merchant Taylors	1
9 C. M. Meredith Bristol		E. P. Cutler Southend	2
10 T. Day Gloucester		J. B. Bland Wasps	3
11 J. Watkins Gloucester		T. F. Huskisson Old Merchant Taylors (Capt.)	4
12 D. Wilton Bristol		T. A. Hall Old Haileyburians	5
13 H. H. Mills Stroud & Camb. University		R. Crouch Rosslyn Park	6
14 A. Meredith Devonport Services		A. A. Edwards Wasps	7
15 G. A. Hudson Gloucester		W. A. Gluck Old Merchant Taylors	8

Referee : **Mr. H. Fry (Lancs.)**

Touch Judges : Mr. T. Millington (Glos. R.F.U.) and Mr. G. H. Ross Goobey (Old Blues)

WE welcome to-day New Friends. The Eastern Counties Rugby Union was founded 50 years ago, and has competed in the County Championship for 47 years. This year it makes its second appearance in a County Championship Semi-Final—a fitting celebration for its Jubilee.

The first occasion was in 1935, when Somerset beat them at Bridgwater by 11 points to 6 after a rousing game. The present occasion is in a sense more meritorious as the number of contesting Counties in the South Eastern Group was this year raised from 6 to 8 by the inclusion of Berkshire and Oxfordshire.

Covering Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk and Cambridgeshire, the Eastern Counties Union legislates for an area second in size only to Yorkshire, but its 75 clubs and schools contain no clubs of first-class standard, such as Gloucester, Bristol, Coventry or Northampton.

For many years after its resuscitation, subsequent to the 1914-18 war, "The Counties" fought an uphill battle to revive and develop Rugby Football in their far-flung area, and many seasons found them at the foot of the South Eastern Group Championship Table. But determination at length turned the scale, and since 1931 there has been no season without at least one County victory.

For this post-1919 revival, the Counties have largely to thank the loyalty and determination of the "men at the helm," outstanding among whom are Barry Wells, President from 1927 to 1947, Arthur Bowers, in turn Treasurer, Team Secretary and now President, who have both given devoted service to the Union for over 40 years, and George Warden, Hon. Secretary for 28 years, from whom I have received the information in these comments.

Many factors have contributed towards the development of Rugby Football in the Eastern Counties, the chief of which is undoubtedly the special attention and encouragement given to School-boy football. Eight members of the present County side first wore the County colours in the Eastern County Schoolboy XV—could D. P. Hepburn have played, the number would have been nine. In addition, games are arranged for the County "A" side, the Eastern Counties Wanderers, and there is a 7-a-side tournament in April each year. An Eastern Counties Referees' Society was also successfully developed.

RALPH A. ROBERTS, *Hon. Sec., G.R.F.U.*