
East Midland Counties Rugby Football Union.

County Championship Semi-Final (Re-play)—

East Midlands v. Gloucestershire

FRANKLIN'S GARDENS, NORTHAMPTON

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17th, 1951

Kick-off 2-30 p.m.

OFFICIAL PROGRAMME

NOTES

A VERY SPECIAL WELCOME TO GLOUCESTERSHIRE whose visit for this re-played Semi-Final has aroused tremendous interest in the Midlands. We have not had the pleasure of seeing them at Franklin's Gardens since 1934. We also extend a warm welcome to the President of the Rugby Football Union, Sir Wavell Wakefield, who expects to be present at this game.

The centre of the programme gives details of the players, and the Press has done ample justice to the records of both County Unions, so, apart from one personal note—a sincere tribute to the splendid County spirit prevailing in the East Midlands team—I am satisfied to leave the present occasion to produce evidence enough that all is well with the Game to-day.

Recalling memories of by-gone days, there are many here this afternoon for whom the visit of Gloucestershire will revive impressions of our late beloved Jimmy Minahan, and I thought it might be of general interest to quote from programme notes on that famous day in March, 1934, when the East Midlands last won the Championship :—

“Here I am, an old Gloucesterian, yet 30 years Honorary Secretary to the East Midlands, endeavouring to keep an open mind on to-day's issue. My old friends, Archie Hudson, Tom Joyce, Sam Tucker, Kit Tanner, and others, say it's impossible and I shall cheer for my home County. Well, as a certain well-known politician said : ‘Wait and See.’

“Thirty-three years ago I came from the County that our visitors to-day have made famous in the Rugger World and when, two years later, I was invited to take up the Honorary Secretaryship of the East Midlands I determined as far as in me lay to build up my adopted County on the lines of Gloucestershire. My first season was a disastrous one, for all matches were lost, but the next season was more successful under the Captaincy of our present President, Mr. H. Claude Palmer. This was the year that the late Lt.-Colonel Edgar Mobbs made his debut and began a brilliant Rugger career that lasted fully eight seasons. We made steady progress, always striving to get to the top, but the mid-week fixtures prevented us fielding a representative side and that handicap was always a too heavy one to carry.

“This season we have won all our group fixtures. defeated Lancashire at Blundellsands by 19 points to 18 points, after being down at half time by 15 points, in a match that surpasses anything I have seen in my 45 years of first-class football. We followed this up by defeating a powerful Barbarians XV in the Mobbs' Memorial Match last week and so we take the field to-day with a feeling it is high time the Midlands won the Championship, and we incline to the hope it is ourselves who will take the honours. In their long career East Midlands and Gloucestershire have only met once, in the Semi-Final of 1920 at Northampton, Gloucestershire winning by two goals two tries (16 points) to one goal two tries (11 points).

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GLOUCESTERSHIRE WHITE			Referee : Mr T. E. PRIEST (Surrey)	EAST MIDLANDS GREEN		
1	W. G. HOOK	Gloucester	FULL BACKS	1	T. GRAY	Northampton
			THREEQUARTERS			
2	J. A. GREGORY	Bristol	Right] Wing [Left	2	N. BAILEY	Northampton
3	J. V. SMITH	Stroud	Right] Centre [Left	3	A. C. TOWELL	Bedford
4	R. SUTTON	Gloucester	Left] Centre [Right	4	L. F. L. OAKLEY	Bedford
5	J. E. TAYLOR	Lydney	Left] Wing [Right	5	J. P. HYDE	Northampton
			HALF-BACKS			
6	D. HUGHES	Lydney	Stand-off	6	R. H. HAYNES	Bedford
7	I. W. PEARCE	Cheltenham	Scrum	7	F. M. FLETCHER...	Bedford
			FORWARDS			
8	T. W. PRICE (Capt.)...	Cheltenham		8	C. R. JACOBS	Northampton
9	F. C. H. HILL	Bath		9	T. SMITH	Northampton
10	E. McCALL	Bristol		10	J. H. WHITING	Northampton
11	F. STEINHOBEL	Cheltenham		11	W. R. HAMP	Northampton
12	R. N. MULLER	Bristol		12	J. F. BANCE	Bedford
13	D. G. PRATTEN	Bristol	Thursday, Mar. 1st at Bedford	13	G. JENKINS	Bedford
14	A. G. HUDSON	Gloucester	EAST MIDLANDS v. BARBARIANS	14	R. C. HAWKES	Northampton
15	B. C. DAINTY	Stroud		15	D. F. WHITE (Capt.)	Northampton



EAST MIDLANDS (v. Gloucestershire), March 10th, 1934.

Top Row—T. D. Thevenard, J. A. Tallent, J. Dicks, R. T. Perkins, C. Slow.

Middle—R. A. Palmer, R. J. Longland, F. Garratt, A. D. Matthews, A. R. Chorlton, N. A. York, J. G. Bott (Referee).

Seated—R. O. Baillon, J. H. Treen, T. Harris, H. C. Palmer, B. C. Gadney, J. B. Minahan, W. H. Weston.
(President). (Captain). (Hon Secretary).

Result—East Midlands 10 points. Gloucestershire Nil.

One dropped goal (C. Slow); two tries (A. D. Matthews and J. A. Tallent).

NOTES—(Continued).

"Reflection revives memory and I recall many fine players who represented England in many great battles. L. J. Matthias, W. J. Johnstone, J. W. Jarman, Walter Jackson, A. E. Wood, H. Berry, George Holford, Billy Johns, Len Corbett, R. C. Pickles, and Brothers Percy and Frank Stout, C. Hall, Whacker Smith, Sid Smart, Dai Gent who is sitting in the press box doubtless reading these notes, and their President and Acting Secretary for this match, Tom Voyce, who with our own Freddy Blakiston will go down to history as the 'Terrible Twin Rovers.' Of course, we can also boast of an equally lengthy list of Internationals but they are so well known to East Midlanders it is unnecessary to mention them.

"I now conclude with a personal note. As already intimated this is my last season as Honorary Secretary. I have handed my resignation to the President, feeling that the time has arrived for a younger man to shoulder the heavy work. I am giving up office with the East Midlands right in the forefront of English Rugby, and I trust those who follow me will never let it slip back. To those splendid sportsmen who have for so long assisted me in my work I would here tender my most grateful thanks. Their loyalty and splendid friendship will always remain a gladdening memory.

"I have dreamed long of this day. Dreamed that we should get into the final, that it be played at Northampton and that our opponents should be my home County. My dreams have at long last been realised. Will my ambition, the winning of the Championship, be fulfilled today or will Gloucestershire equal Yorkshire's record of nine times Champion County? The answer will come this afternoon."

The two occasions present quite a striking parallel.

R. A. PALMER, *Hon. Team Secretary.*