

--RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION
COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP

SEMI-FINAL

MIDDLESEX

versus

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

THE ATHLETIC GROUND - RICHMOND

(by kind permission of the Board of Directors)

Saturday, 19th February, 1972

Kick-Off 3.0 p.m.

RICHMOND v. BRISTOL KICK-OFF 12.0 NOON

COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP - SEMI-FINAL

MIDDLESEX v. GLOUCESTERSHIRE

SATURDAY, 19th FEBRUARY, 1972

Kick-Off 3.0 p.m.

MIDDLESEX 16 (1 TRY; 4 PENALTIES)

(Colours : Blue and White Hoops).

4PG	R. A. CODD (Rosslyn Park) (CAPT.)	...	...	Full Back	15.
	N. LEWIS (St. Mary's Hospital)	...	...	Right Wing	14.
1T	J. L. SHANKLIN * (London Welsh)	...	...	Right Centre	13.
	A. HILL (Moseley)	...	...	Left Centre	12.
	N. R. BOULT (Bristol)	...	...	Left Wing	11.
	E. W. KIRTON * (Harlequins)	...	...	Fly Half	10.
	J. H. MONTGOMERY (Metropolitan Police)	...	...	Scrum Half	9.
	R. L. BARLOW (Rosslyn Park)	...	...	Forward	1.
	A. V. BODDY (Metropolitan Police)	...	...	Forward	2.
	D. J. K. TRENCH (Rosslyn Park)	...	...	Forward	3.
	C. W. RALSTON * (Richmond)	...	...	Forward	4.
	I. C. JONES * (London Welsh)	...	...	Forward	5.
	C. W. THORBURN (London Scottish)	...	...	Forward	6.
	A. G. RIPLEY * (Rosslyn Park)	...	...	Forward	8.
	K. R. MCINTYRE (Rosslyn Park)	...	...	Forward	7.

Touch Judge : E. V. BARNES (L.S.R.F.U.R.)

* International.

Referee : K. A. PATTINSON, Esq. (NORTH MIDLANDS)

GLOUCESTERSHIRE 19 (1 GOAL; 1 TRY;

(Colours : White).

1 DROPPED GOAL;
2 PENALTIES

1T	P. KNIGHT (Bristol)	...	...	Full Back	15.
1T	A. MORLEY (Bristol)	...	...	Right Wing	14.
1c2PG	J. R. GABITASS (Bristol)	...	...	Right Centre	13.
	R. JARDINE (Gloucester)	...	...	Left Centre	12.
	C. WILLIAMS (Bristol)	...	...	Left Wing	11.
1PG	R. REDWOOD (Cheltenham)	...	...	Fly Half	10.
	J. CANNON (Clifton)	...	...	Scrum Half	9.
	M. A. BURTON * (Gloucester)	...	...	Forward	1.
	J. V. PULLIN * (Bristol)	...	...	Forward	2.
	R. COWLING (Gloucester)	...	...	Forward	3.
	D. E. J. WATT * (Bristol) (CAPT.)	...	...	Forward	4.
	A. BRINN * (Gloucester)	...	...	Forward	5.
	D. M. ROLLITT * (Bristol)	...	...	Forward	6.
	R. C. HANNAFORD * (Bristol)	...	...	Forward	8.
	R. SMITH (Gloucester)	...	...	Forward	7.

Touch Judge : B. EDWARDS (G.R.F.U.)

* International.

NOTES

BY BARRY NEWCOMBE

(Rugby Correspondent, Evening Standard).

A Gloucester forward was extolling the virtues of his side to me the other day in these terms: "We've got the best pack in the land."

Later a Middlesex forward was licking his lips around one of those hot pies they sell at Rosslyn Park and said: "We know they'll be taking us on up front. It should be very interesting."

Those two snippets of conversation, for what they are worth, give a growling introduction to the county championship semi-final here today to decide whether Middlesex or Gloucester go through to the final against Warwickshire.

The other week I made a quick 50p. because someone bet me Gloucester would not reach the semi-final. At one stage it began to look as if they were taking their time. The South West group went to a play-off and the challenge of Berkshire had to be met in the quarter final.

So while Middlesex were almost forgetting what playing together actually meant — their last match was in December — Gloucester were rolling on to today's game.

Since they were champions in 1937, Gloucester have played in five finals and lost them all. They have also been beaten in the final for the past two years, latterly by Surrey who won 14-3 at Kingsholm.

To go back to the point about the Gloucester forwards, all eight of them were in the England trials this season. And three, Mike Burton, John Pullin, and Alan Brinn, made the international side. It really does not need underlining that David Watt must feel confident about his forwards today.

Middlesex like their forwards as well. Six of them played in the England trials. Ian Jones and Charlie Thorburn, who make up the eight, do not qualify for England anyway but one was capped for Wales and the other is a Scottish triallist.

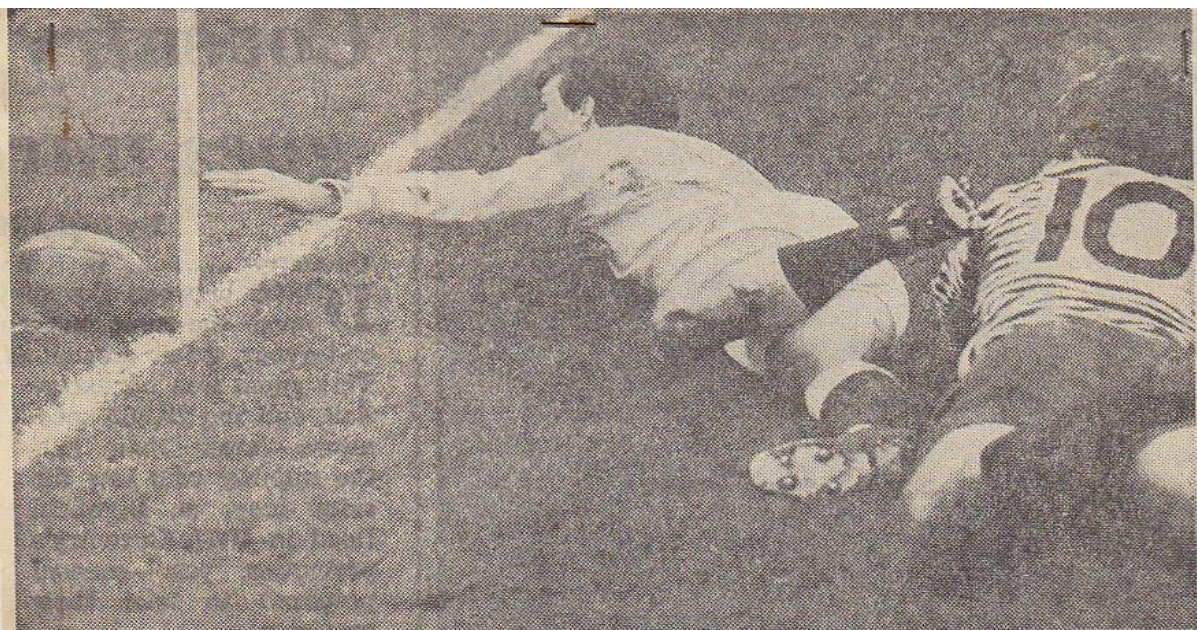
Andy Ripley and Chris Ralston are in the England team, and Tony Boddy is reserve to Pullin against whom he is hooking today. Middlesex also have three internationals behind the pack — Earl Kirton of New Zealand, Jim Shanklin of Wales, and Alastair Biggar of Scotland.

Ray Codd runs the teamwork from full-back and having played a fair amount of his rugby in the West Country will be doubly keen to win today and take Middlesex into their first final since 1968.

In prospect, it looks an intriguing match. Middlesex built up so much of their team play this season from scratch and now pitch it into the hardest test so far. Whoever comes out on top, they will know they have earned it.



D. E. J. Watt, Gloucestershire skipper, wins the line-out from Middlesex forward C. W. Ralston. No. 1 is R. L. Barlow and No. 5 I. C. Jones.



Full-back Knight, having touched down Gloucestershire's first try, in the same movement is swept into touch by Middlesex fly-half Kirton.