

Rugby Football Union
County Championship Final



OFFICIAL
PROGRAMME
10 PENCE

LANCASHIRE

VERSUS

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Blundellsands

Saturday 23rd March 1974

COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL 1974

LANCASHIRE VERSUS GLOUCESTERSHIRE

COUNTY OFFICIALS

LANCASHIRE

President: W. R. Hall
Hon. Secretary: J. Walsh
Asst. Hon. Sec.: A. Gott
Hon. Treasurer: J. H. Waters
Asst. Hon. Treasurer: J. A. Lambert
Hon. Team Sec.: J. Benson

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

President: C. Gardner
Hon. Secretary: G. E. Wright
Hon. Treasurer: K. J. Cottle
Hon. Team Sec.: D. J. Walter
Vice-President: J. V. Smith

PATHS TO THE FINAL

LANCASHIRE

Lancs 15; Cheshire 12 (Broughton Park)
Durham 15; Lancs. 16 (West Hartlepool)
Lancashire 13; Northumberland 0
(Blundellsands)
Cumberland & Westm'd 13; Lancs. 32
(Kendal)
Lancs. 16; Yorkshire 8 (Fylde)

Semi-Final

Eastern Counties 3; Lancs. 13
(Cambridge)

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Gloucs 21; Devon 9 (Gloucester)
Somerset 6; Gloucs. 10 (Weston)
Cornwall 7; Gloucs. 9 (Camborne)

Quarter-Final

Buckinghamshire 0; Glous. 10
(Aylesbury)

Semi-Final

Warwickshire 15; Glous. 27
(Coventry)

REGIMENTAL BAND OF THE GREEN HOWARDS

by kind permission of the Commanding Officer
Lt.-Col. R. D. Ashforth

COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL 1974**Kick-off 3 pm****LANCASHIRE**15. **D. GULLICK** (Orrell)14. **A. A. RICHARDS** (Fylde)13. **P. PHILLIPS** (Orrell)12. **M. A. J. GLOVER** (West Park)11. **C. WILDING** (Fylde)10. **I. McDONNELL** (Fylde)9. **W. B. ASHTON** (Orrell)1. **W. F. ANDERSON** (Orrell and England)2. **C. D. FISHER** (Waterloo)3. **F. E. COTTON** (Coventry and England)4. **A. R. TRICKEY** (Sale)5. **M. M. LEADBETTER**
(Broughton Park and England)6. **R. CREED** (Sale and England)7. **A. NEARY (Captain)**
(Broughton Park and England)8. **D. SEABROOK** (Orrell)Touch Judge: **P. E. HUGHES**
(Manchester & District Referees' Society)**FULL-BACKS****THREE-QUARTERS****HALF-BACKS****FORWARDS****GLOUCESTERSHIRE**15. **P. E. BUTLER** (Gloucester)14. **R. J. CLEWES** (Gloucester)13. **R. JARDINE** (Gloucester)12. **J. A. BAYLIS** (Gloucester)11. **A. J. MORLEY** (Bristol and England)10. **R. L. REDWOOD** (Gloucester)9. **R. HARDING** (Cambridge University)1. **R. J. COWLING** (Gloucester)2. **J. V. PULLIN (Captain)**
(Bristol and England)3. **M. A. BURTON** (Gloucester and England)4. **A. BRINN** (Gloucester and England)5. **J. H. FIDLER** (Gloucester)6. **J. A. WATKINS** (Gloucester and England)7. **J. HAINES** (Gloucester)8. **R. C. HANNAFORD** (Bristol and England)Touch Judge: **J. V. SMITH** (Gloucestershire R. F. U.)

Referee:

R. F. JOHNSON (Kent/London Referees' Society)

A WELCOME TO WATERLOO

From J. C. RICHARDS President

The Waterloo Football Club is today proud to act as host to the County Final and to welcome the Lancashire and Gloucestershire players to its ground. This is the seventh County Final we have been privileged to stage and on no less than three of those occasions Gloucestershire have been Lancashire's opponents.

A very warm welcome is also extended to all our other visitors today. Let us hope that the game we are about to watch will be as memorable as the best of its predecessors.

PROGRAMME NOTES

By DAVID IRVINE 'The Guardian'

On an occasion such as this it is hard to credit that there are those (possibly even some here today) who wish to see the county championship scrapped; or at best reduced, as the Mallaby Report recommends, to a minor localised competition that would lead precisely nowhere.

Certainly Blundellsands this afternoon is neither an appropriate place nor time for abolitionist voices to make themselves heard, for Lancashire and Gloucestershire have probably contributed more than most to the successful maintenance of the championship throughout the years. Indeed during the past half-century there have been no less than 25 finals in which one, other or both have been directly engaged.

With this sort of background, even the uncertainty of the competition's future can do nothing to dim the promise of today's seventh championship meeting of the two contestants. At present the score stands at 4—2 in Lancashire's favour with one match drawn, but, traditionally, the sides have produced keen, close-fought encounters with rarely more than a few points between them.

Gloucestershire are no strangers to the final—in fact this is their fifth in succession, the most consistent run achieved by any team since Durham just after the turn of the century. For Charlie Hannaford this will be an eighth championship final appearance for, in addition to playing in the last four alongside John Pullin and Alan Brinn, he also appeared in three (including one replay) with Durham in the mid-sixties.

Nor is it Gloucestershire's first visit to Blundellsands. They won here 13—7 in the final of 1930; drew 8—8 with two drop goals from that remarkable little fly-half W. E. Jones in 1947 (but lost the subsequent replay at Bristol); and lost 9—3 on March 12, 1949. And that, surprisingly enough, was the last occasion that Lancashire managed to win a final at Blundellsands—a quarter of a century ago.

Since then the side have met three times on Gloucestershire's territory. In a semifinal in 1964—a match, incidentally, in which both

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John Bayliss, one of Gloucestershire's centres today, and Lancashire coach John Burgess played—Lancashire won 19–9 at Bristol but the West Countrymen took their revenge in another semifinal at Kingsholm in 1970. And in last season's final at Bristol, of course, Lancashire came out on top by 17–12.

Experienced as Gloucestershire are, they don't hold a monopoly in that sphere. Richard Trickey, who plays in his 66th county game, has already appeared in three finals for Lancashire—two of them as winners and in which Tony Richards (41 games), Mike Leadbetter (26) and Tony Neary (37) also participated. Richard has some way to go to equal Gordon Rimmer's six finals but he is still hopeful!

Today is quite a memorable occasion for Colin Fisher too. In 1947 his father—a hooker like Colin—played in a Blundellsands final against Gloucestershire, the game that ended in a draw. Curiously Colin is the one Waterloo player taking part today, which contrasts vividly with the eight players from the club who participated in the very first Blundellsands final, against Middlesex, in 1929.

But back to this afternoon. Having seen Lancashire in most of their games and Gloucestershire in their splendid semifinal victory over Warwickshire at Coventry, I have little doubt that this has the makings of an even better match than last year's final at Bristol. Although the players may know each other well, both sides have widened their approach over the last 12 months and are capable of some outstanding rugby. All we can ask now is that the better side should win.
