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# Editorial

May I on behalf of the Llanelli Rugby Football Club extend the warmest of welcomes to our famous visitors, Gloucester RFC, a Club with a great tradition extending over 104 years.

Like the Scarlets they have made a great impact in competitve rugby, and have only been defeated four times in six seasons of Cup rugby. They won the John Player Trophy in 1972-73, and aim to win again this year.

Llanelli won at Newbridge last Saturday, and the pack fielded was one of the youngest in the history of the club, this I believe is an indication of the strength in depth the club possesses.

Last Saturday was a red letter day for Andy Hill, when he scored his 250th try for the Club, our heartiest congratulations to Andy, a fine player, and an excellent clubman.

John J. Williams, I regret, is unable to play today, last Saturday he was a victim of a vicious punch in the mouth by a Newbridge forward, resulting in his needing a dentist who happily did an excellent job, and we hope he will be fit and well for the game against England next Saturday.

Croeso Caerloyw — Welcome to Gloucester – here's to a grand game of rugby.

1977

- RUGB

1976

HAMPIONS

CHAMPIONS — BREWERS FELINFOEL BEERS 1976 — 1980

LANELLI R.F.C

### **GLOUCESTER R.F.C.**—A MAGNIFICENT CLUB BY ANY

STANDARDS By GLAN WISE, (Llanelli News Sports writer)

Anyone visiting the Cathedral City of Gloucester are made readily aware that it is very much a rugby mad stronghold. All sporting discussions are centred around their much cherished and world reknowned Cherry and Whites—the colours they play in and the name they are affectionately known as. Unlike other English Cities it has the unique distinction of having rugby as the No. 1 sport, with soccer very much in the background.

On a recent visit to their club at Kingsholm, I was amazed at the Welsh-like atmosphere surrounding this Mecca of West Country Rugby Football. It is apparent that the fervent dedication of players and administrators have made and (are making) this one of the foremost clubs in the land. It is an immensely proud club, a club which has produced a wealth of talent on and off the field in their one hundred and four years existence.

The most revered personalities, in their colourful history is that great rugby football servant, reigning club president, Tom Voyce. Ranked as the father of all wing forwards. He gained a total of 27 Caps in the 1920's, a club record, he also played for the British Lions. He has served the game of rugby as player and administrator longer than any other man—55 years, it goes without saying that he is held in the highest esteem in all rugby circles.

In Post war years, many outstanding internationals have donned their country's jersey with distinction. Don Rutherford, Peter Ford, Alan Brinn, Mike Burton, John Watkins, Peter Butler, to name but a few. Then there



was the famous Welsh Captain of the fifties John Gwilliam who won 23 caps for his country as a Cherry and Whites player.

Gloucester have always managed to produce great forwards, and much of their success over the years has been attributed to the power and control and dominance of their pack.

In 1972, their powerful pack, one of the greatest in their history, laid the foundations for their sides' triumph in the English R.U. Knock-Out Cup Competition, the year of its inception.

A feat which they hope to achieve again this season, having reached the Quarter-final stages with a convincing 12-3 win over the formidable Britol XV at Kingsholm a couple of weeks ago.

Gloucester oppose last year's winners Gosforth in the big North v. South clash next Saturday.

Aspirations are running high at the club, coach, Mike Nicholls, one of Gloucester's finest ever captains who retired prematurely last season with a leg injury, is quietly confident that his side can pull it off against Roger Uttley and his men and move into next month's semi-finals, but he doesn't under-estimate the task that faces them.

Mike will be pinning his hopes on his heavyweight pack obtaining good clean possession. Whilst they do not claim to have a glittering back division, they have a thoroughly workmanlike one, with internationals Peter Butler, flyhalf Chris Williams and under '23' Cap Richard Mogg on the wing, players capable of notching up the points if given the opportunity.

Gloucester, like Llanelli enjoy and appreciate the many thousands of fanatical supporters they get for home and in instances away matches.

We at Stradey extend our sincere best wishes for next weeks encounter and hope you go on to win the cup for a second time.





## AWESOME POWER AT FORWARD

by GARETH HUGHES, 'Swansea Sound' and 'Football Echo' Reporter

Gloucester have always been one of the most redoubtable of English club sides. Their reputation has been built on awesome and uncompromising power at forward, supported by a high degree of competence and industry behind the scrum.

Solidity at full-back has always been a hallmark of Gloucester rugby. A generation ago, it was that fine English international, Bill Hook, who sapped the energies and aspirations of teams visiting the Kingsholm ground with a degree of soundness and dependability surpassed only by the most rarely gifted of players in the position.

The standards set so impressively by Bill Hook are being maintained today by Peter Butler, a full-back whose place-kicking accuracy has been frequently displayed in televised games. With four caps to his credit, including one against France last season, Peter Butler is currently recapturing his best form after a three month absence through injury. Last year, he was the most prolific goal kicker in English rugby, with more than 500 points to his credit, and among his accomplishments was kicking all of Gloucestershire's 24 points in their emphatic County Championship win over Middlesex at Twickenham.

Until their defeat by Lancashire in this season's competition, Gloucestershire had dominated the English County Championship in almost as resounding a fashion as Llanelli have monopolised the WRU Cup. The West countrymen have, in fact, won the English Championship for the past three seasons, and many of the Gloucester Club team have, like Peter Butler, played a



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Machynis, Llanelli

notable part in these successes.

Rather surprisingly perhaps, Gloucester have not managed to emulate the County team's inspiring record in the Club Knock-out Competition. They won the trophy in the first year in which the competition was held, 1972, but subsequently failed to progress beyond the second round until the present season. In a fortnight's time they travel to Gosforth, to meet the Cup holders in one of the quarter final matches, and will no doubt look upon today's match as important preparation for that hard challenge.

There are five full English internationals in the present Gloucester squad. One of them, inside-half Peter Kingston, the holder of two caps, is currently out of action through injury, giving his promising understudy, Wayne Birchley, the opportunity to show his skills. Outside half Chris Williams was capped against France last season, and in the pack are two players whose reputations are formidable, to say the least — British Lions prop Mike Burton, who has fifteen caps, and the outstanding club captain, flanker John Watkins, who has played for England four times.

There are two Under 23 internationals in left wing Richard Mogg and lock forward Steve Boyle. Gloucester's most experienced centre, Richard Jardine, is out of the side through illness, but two other players to look out for are right wing Bob Clewes, who was top try scorer for the club last season with more than thirty tries, and flanker John Haines, a back row worker rated by many as more effective even than Bristol's current international, Mike Rafter.

Judged by their own high standards, Gloucester have not perhaps been quite at their best this season, but their record will stand comparison with most of the leading English clubs,



and a team which can include Bedford, Coventry, Bristol and the Harlequins among their recent vanquished cannot be regarded lightly.

The return of Gloucester to the Llanelli fixture card after a break of

fourteen years is welcomed unreservedly. The two clubs are among the most prestigious in their respective countries, and it is only proper that they again come together in what is certain to be a rousing test of strength.

#### **ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S POSERS**

1—Phil Bennett first captained a senior Welsh XV during 1970-71 season v Fiji at Cardiff. Scoreline Wales Under 25 — 8pts. Fiji 6pts.

2—The two Llanelli centres v 1970 Springboks were John Thomas and Graham Griffin.

3-The Llanelli captain in the first WRU Cup Final was Phil Bennett.

4-J. J. Williams scored 12 tries on the 1974 Lions tour.

NOW TRY THESE (Answers in next match programme)

1—Most rugby supporters are aware that Phil Bennett became Wales' first 'Sub', but who can claim the distinction of being second.

2-Name the Llanelli players that appeared for Wales 'B' last season.

Devised by LES WILLIAMS

