

EBBW VALE
RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB
SEASON 1980/81

OFFICIAL PROGRAMME 15p

EUGENE
CROSS
PARK
EBBW
VALE



WEDNESDAY
SEPTEMBER
17th
1980
Kick-Off 7 p.m.

EBBW VALE
v.
GLOUCESTER

Tonight's game is sponsored by: Camnaven Ltd.

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| | |
|---------------------|----|
| Paul Rees | 15 |
| Mark Hughes | 14 |
| Ian Goslin | 13 |
| John Davies | 12 |
| Ian Evans | 11 |
| Nicky Hunt | 10 |
| Adrian Thomas | 9 |
| Colin Williams | 1 |
| Jonathan Williams | 2 |
| Peter Morgan | 3 |
| Elwyn Jones | 4 |
| David Fryer(Capt.) | 5 |
| Phil Gardner | 6 |
| Carl Dennehy | 8 |
| Robert Harris | 7 |
| <i>Replacement:</i> | |
| Des Parry | |
| Chris Coughlin | |

GLOUCESTER

| |
|---------------------|
| Peter Butler |
| Bob Clewes |
| Richard Mogg |
| Paul Howell |
| Paudraig Conway |
| Brian Russell |
| Peter Kingston |
| Gordon Sergeant |
| (Capt.) Steve Mills |
| Alan Brooks |
| Steve Boyle |
| John Fiddler |
| Viv Wooley |
| Mike Teague |
| Paul Wood |
| <i>Replacement:</i> |
| Kevin White |
| Steve Baker |

Referee: Mr. G. Howells (Aberdare)

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CLUB NOTES...

We are pleased to welcome our old friends from the other side of Offa's Dyke, Gloucester. We have been playing each other for a long time and we thoroughly enjoy our bi-annual pilgrimage to Kingsholm as, we hope, they enjoy their visits to Ebbw Vale. The trip is not too far and there are some excellent hostelrys to be visited on the way back (Saturday games only) just to answer the calls of nature, of course!!! Games between the clubs have usually "gone with the head" so to speak. Never mind one day we will win at Kingsholm. Perhaps we should aim to play them when there is a county game on, or when half their pack is on a squad week-end. Fixture Sec.—please note. Last Saturday Gloucester went down to Coventry by 16pts. to 3pts. and, as they rarely lose two games on the trot an interesting encounter looks on the cards.

What happens when an irresistible force meets an immovable object? The answer to this conundrum was given last Saturday when the Pontypool pack (the irresistible force) met the Ebbw Vale pack (the immovable object) and the result was an enthralling game of rugby football enjoyed to the full by everyone present. It must have been many a long day since the Pontypool front row was lifted and the Pontypool pack pushed back yards. This happened at the first scrum from then on the battle was joined with no quarter asked or given. Apart from one unsavoury incident, everything else was hard, but within the laws of rugby football. It should give the pack the confidence to know that they can take on the best and still more than hold their own. The corner-stone of all this effort, and it is known that the pack will not mind one of their number being singled out, was the supreme scrummaging of loose head prop, Colin Williams. Graham Price has demolished so many, nay, every loose head that he has played against over the years that it must have been a salutary experience for him to be on the receiving end for once. I'll bet the All Blacks wish that they had a loose head who can handle Graham Price as well as Colin did last Saturday. I hope that this eulogy on a very fine pack performance does not make them rest upon their laurels. There is still work to be done as the coach well knows. The clearing up of loose ball at the front of the line out, better support for the jumper, improvement of the rolling maul, laying back of the ball when tackled so that it can be rucked, back row support for the far wing after a handling movement. Thank you, pack, for a very fine performance, but you have still to reach your peak. Not to forget the threequarters—they supported the effort up front with everything they had. The threequarters all tackled well. The full back caught everything that came his way. The only blot would appear to be the endemic one of being unable to 'work the ball' in the centre. **Next Home Game—Wednesday, 24th September v. Swansea. K.O. 7 p.m.**

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GLoucester's VOICE FROM THE PAST

Earlier this year Gloucester mourned the death of an immortal, a prototype of the modern flanker and a great international who never through illness, injury, family troubles or business problems missed one of England's 27 matches from 1920 to 1926.

Anthony Thomas Voyce was President of Gloucester when he died and the Gloucester clubhouse is full of memories of a very special rugby man. In 27 internationals Tom Voyce was on the winning side 19 times including four wins against Wales out of six played. He played against the unbeaten 1924 All-Blacks who played 30 matches without real trouble beating Wales 19-0 at Swansea and England 17-11 at Twickenham.

The Twickers affair was watched by the Prince of Wales, bowler hat and all, but his feathers were probably ruffled by the distinctly unfriendly atmosphere which developed between sons of the Mother Country and the Colonials from Down Under. The referee was from Neath and Albert Freethy stood no nonsense. After some skirmishing concerning the scrummages and the fight for the loose head position—quite the thing those days—Mr. Freethy the Welshman told the English and New Zealanders under his control that Royal Box or no Royal Box, the next bad boy would depart from hence.

A Mrs. Brownlie up to that moment was the proudest mother in Hawkes's Bay with two sons playing for the All-Blacks and before the Prince of Wales too. It took a few silly seconds on the part of Cyril Brownlie to ruin a match and keep his mum indoors for a week or so. Cyril forgot the warning, Albert did not, and for the first time in an international match a player was sent off. There is no record that young Brownlie gave the eyes right to the Royal Box but the toffs at the top saw to it that Mr. Freethy did not get an international match for some time, a fate suffered years later by another Neath referee, Ivor David who sent Colin Windon off at Llanelli during the Wallabies 1947-48 tour.

Tom Voyce, hard but fair, didn't like it a bit particularly as New Zealand still managed to win quite easily, a situation which has almost been repeated in modern times when a 14 man side brought out extra resources to hold out and nearly win.

With Voyce playing for England, that country won the Grand Slam in 1921, 1923 and 1924 when he became only the second Gloucester club player to go on a British Isles tour. Old Merchant Taylor's supplied the captain, a posh club and a posh name in Dr. R. Cove-Smith, but that didn't help as the Springboks won the series 3-0 with one drawn. The next Gloucester man to tour with the Lions was full back Don Rutherford, now the RFU Coaching Organiser and one of the large party we entertained last Saturday when delegates at the WRU Centenary Conference attended our derby game with Pontypool. Don was a fine full back and gained 14 caps from 1960 to 1967 as well as being in the last English team to win at Cardiff, back in 1963. Rutherford went on the unsettled and unsatisfactory 1966 Lions tour to New Zealand and Australia when a side full of talent was badly organised and lost to the Kiwis 4-0 although winning both tests in Australia.

Gloucester, appropriately in view of their forward traditions, have supplied two props to recent Lions teams. That greatest of characters Mike Burton went to South Africa on the invincible tour of 1974 and Phil Blakeway was the unlucky man who suffered injury like many others on the 1980 trip. He is still recovering and we wish him well in his bid to hold his place in the England team who seek their first win at Cardiff in 18 years when they trot out on the National Stadium next January.

Kingsholm, Gloucester's famous home, is within earshot of the city's cathedral bells. On a quiet day it's possible for the congregation to hear the supporters roaring the Cherry and Whites on and for the supporters to enjoy the singing of the choir boys. One whose interest is in both camps, spiritual and temporal, is a Welshman named Mervyn Hughes whose rugby background at Chepstow and Cardiff helped him get an Oxford Blue in the Thirties. Elevated to the awesome and noisy position of Canon at Gloucester Cathedral, Canon Hughes has probably slipped in a few words on behalf of the Club, particularly before Cup games or derbies with Bristol. He must have done some good over the years for Gloucester rarely lose at home and now Canon Hughes is President Hughes having taken over that role for Gloucester when Tom Voyce passed over to the great Clubhouse In The Sky.

As well as having a new President our visitors have a new captain in hooker Steve Mills, a fact which reminds us of a great predecessor of his, Mike Nicholls he of the lived-in face and rugged countenance. If Mike is here tonight we'll make sure he doesn't go home thirsty, if he is not perhaps his club will tell him he is still remembered at Ebbw Vale. And if Canon Hughes is still popping in a few words on rugby to the place upstairs let's hope he remembers whose side he's on next January!

R.E.L.



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