

LONDON IRISH R.F.C.



The Avenue
Sunbury on Thames

20p

JOHN PLAYER CUP — 4th Round
Saturday, 28th February, 1981—k.o. 3.00 p.m.

London Irish

Gloucester

15	MOSS FINN †*	FULL BACK		FULL BACK	P. BUTLER †	15
14	JIM BATES †	RIGHT WING	THREE-QUARTERS	RIGHT WING	P. CONWAY †	14
13	HUGH CONDON *‡	RIGHT CENTRE		RIGHT CENTRE	P. TAYLOR †	13
12	ROGER MCKIBBIN	LEFT CENTRE		LEFT CENTRE	S. PARSLÖE	12
11	CLIVE MEANWELL †	LEFT WING		LEFT WING	R. MOGG †	11
10	PAUL O'DONNELL †	STAND OFF	HALF-BACKS	STAND OFF	C. PRYCE	10
9	GRAHAM PAIGE	SCRUM HALF		SCRUM HALF	S. BAKER	9
1	TOM HENNESSY †	PROP	FORWARDS	PROP	G. SARGENT †	1
2	GUY BERINGER °*	HOOKER		HOOKER	S. MILLS †	2
3	PETER ENEVDLSON	PROP		PROP	P. BLAKEWAY †	3
4	DAVID MCCRACKEN *	SECOND ROW	† International	SECOND ROW	S. BOYLE †	4
5	MIKE SMYTHE *	SECOND ROW	‡ County	SECOND ROW	J. FIDLER †	5
6	WALTER JONES °‡	WING	* Inter-Provincial	WING	J. GADD	6
8	JOHN O'DRISCOLL †* (Capt)	LOCK	Referee:	LOCK	M. TEAGUE	8
7	STEWART MCKINNEY †*	WING	A. Welsby, Esq.	WING	M. LONGSTAFF	7
	GENE McCARTHY	REPLACEMENTS	(Lancs./Man. Society)	REPLACEMENTS	P. KINGSTON	
	NEIL MURPHY				K. WHITE	

Reserve Referee/Touch Judge: R. J. HOWARD (London Society)

● Today's Match Ball is sponsored by G. P. ARTHUR, Director of CARGOSY FREIGHT CO. LTD., Argonaut House, Bath Road, Hounslow, Middlesex ●

Today is the big one for both London Irish and Gloucester who meet in this afternoon's 4th Round of the John Player Cup. London Irish are at full strength while Gloucester field a XV minus Bob Clewes and Paul Hull who are still on the sick list. The two clubs have met seven times since fixtures were begun in 1973, with one match cancelled. At the first outing Gloucester won at Kingsholm convincingly, 27-9; there then followed three consecutive Irish victories in 1975, 1976 and 1977, until Gloucester won at Sunbury on the morning of a Twickenham international, in 1978. Last year London Irish travelled to Gloucester to beat a home side at full strength, 12-3, whilst here at Sunbury, earlier this season, the Irish could only eke out a one point home win against a Gloucester side fielding no less than nine reserves. It must be said that on many of the meetings between the clubs, Gloucester have lost many automatic first-strength players to Gloucester County calls. Peter Arnold, the Gloucester programme writer, gives us these notes on some of their players appearing this afternoon. Consistent goal kicker, Peter Butler, 10 years plus with the club, is at full back; their captain, Steve Mills, this year's skipper of England "B", has been a perennial reserve to Peter Wheeler on the senior side, wing Richard Mogg and lock, Steve Boyle, are two more England "B" players, with Boyle being Billy Beaumont's international shadow, a task prop, Sargent, has done for Fran Cotton. Flanker, John Gadd, was in the England squad trial; fly half Pryce is an ex-England schoolboy and was in the side which beat the Welsh schoolboys at the Arms Park; whilst scrum half Steve Baker was on stand-by for last Saturday's Calcutta Cup game at Twickenham.

Gloucester are arriving in style. Sunbury station is threatened with a special trainload of supporters arriving from the West Country at 1.15 and tales of numerous packed coaches abound. London Irish support hopes to be at full strength, save for those still lost in the mists of Pontypool and Cardiff from last week's inglorious events. London Irish lost 27-12 to Pontypool after starting with a positive burst of inspiration getting a goal and a penalty. However, a spate of incautious penalty-giving-away in the second quarter of the first half seemed to give Pontypool the advantage from then on, and the rest of the match was a fairly accurate re-run, insofar as the pack was concerned, of Ireland's fifteen finest the following afternoon. London Irish and Pontypool have now commenced regular fixtures and they will be playing us the weekend of England/Wales at Sunbury next season, with our returning the compliment on the Wales/Ireland eve the one after that. Interesting historic point is that last Friday night was the 5th meeting between the clubs. In 1905 there was an 11-11 draw (Billy O'Connell scoring a magnificent try); in 1911 we lost

40-duck, and lost again on Christmas Day 1931, 29-6. But here's the good news. We actually won in 1959, 5-3, from a Bamber try which McDermott converted, against a penalty goal. Last Friday after the game Pontypool assured us, amid their first-class hospitality, that we shouldn't be disappointed and should look upon that match as a run-out for Gloucester here today since their rugby playing styles, according to Pontypool, are the same. And they were trying to cheer us up!

Paddy Hughes left a long message about today's mini rugby. "The London Irish Under-21's you see today are playing Ruislip, one of the most successful mini sides in London and the Home Counties. Earlier this season our less experienced boys lost 0-8. So far our team have scored 102 points in nine matches. The mini rugby pack is made up of four players with, in the front row, a hooker and prop interchangeable on the put-in so that each gets used to the loose and tight head situation. Then there is a lock and flanker packing on the put-in side. The backs are scrum and fly halves, centre, wing and full back, and the great difference between the mini and senior XV-a-side game is that there are no line outs. Only a scrum 7 metres in from touch. Also, the scrum half is not allowed to menace his opposite number until the ball is out of the scrum". More mini news in the next programme.

Don't forget tonight's disco at the "Winning Post" on the Chertsey Road, and make a note, poker players, of the next Pokorama here at Sunbury which will be on Friday, April 10th starting at 7.30pm.

The London Irish Dinner has now been fixed for the Tara Hotel again on Friday, 8th May, which is the eve of the Middlesex Sevens at Twickenham. Tickets will be £15 each, or thereabouts; the price to be finalised when Paddy McGaughey consults his computer. The man in charge is Brian O'Regan, whose telephone numbers are 584 2704 (day) and 789 1046 (home).

News reaches my desk of some "quare" goings-on in the officiating of one of the junior side's games recently. The referee, thought to be a refugee from Croke Park, started this rugby code fixture by instituting a "hot ball". The matter was investigated and the said official was found to be suffering from a particular type of tiredness more commonly associated with an evening in "The Bunch of Grapes".

As we meet Streatham in the final of the Surrey Cup on 15th March, last Sunday's regular fixture against them was cancelled. The match, to be played on a Sunday, will be at Streatham & Epsom RFC's ground, Rugby Lane, West Drive, Cheam, Surrey. Please make a note of it as this might be (John Player Cup permitting) our last home game before that date.

B.O'H