



GLOUCESTER RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

FOUNDED 1873

PRESIDENT

CANON H. M. HUGHES, B.A.

GLOUCESTER

v.

NEATH

Saturday, 9th April, 1983

Kingsholm, Gloucester

Kick-off 3.00 p.m.

OFFICIAL PROGRAMME 15p

0618

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15 DREW 15

GLOUCESTER	
Cherry & White	
	Full Back
15.	T. Smith
	Three Quarters
* 14.	P. Pritchard
* 13.	P. Taylor
12.	C. O'Donoghue
* 11.	N. Price
	Half Backs
10.	M. Hamlin
§ 9.	S. Baker
	Forwards
*† 1.	G. Sargent
*† 2.	S. Mills (Capt.)
3.	R. Phillips
4.	N. Scrivens
§ 5.	J. Brain
* 6.	P. Wood
7.	M. Longstaff
*§ 8.	M. Teague

REPLACEMENTS

NEATH	
	Full Back
15.	N. Harris
	Three Quarters
† 14.	E. Rees (Capt.)
13.	J. Price
12.	K. Jones
11.	S. Powell
	Half Backs
10.	A. Payne
9.	C. Morgan
	Forwards
1.	P. Langford
2.	M. Richards
3.	H. Hopkins
4.	R. Hughes
5.	J. Willis
6.	G. Jones
7.	D. Morgan
8.	T. Waldron

REPLACEMENTS

C. Gnojek
C. Mayberry-Woolfe

Referee: K. Griffiths (London Society)

† International

§ Under 23 International

• County



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Long time no see!

As you know, it's always an advantage to be able to quote recent results between Gloucester and visiting sides — just to put things into perspective. That's not possible today, of course, because it's some years since we have had the pleasure of welcoming Neath to Kingsholm, which makes today's festivities — the last first team game here for the 1982/3 season — in a way, symmetrical. You'll remember that back in September, we started the whole thing off with a visit from Swansea, who also, for various reasons, hadn't visited us for a while. Swansea, of course, play in white, while Neath are predominantly black. Odd how things work out.

Nevertheless, Neath aren't an unknown quantity; not if you have the wide knowledge of the game that the average Kingsholm regular does.

Indeed, it would be true to say that we can't claim to have a thoroughly comprehensive list of Welsh opponents without Neath, and our visitors are therefore doubly welcome.

It's a long time since we've had the chance to drink beer with Neath players and supporters. In fact, it will be some time before we have the chance to quaff the odd libation over the traditional match post mortem, this being the last home game.

So let's make up for it today, and provide a traditional 'elver eater' welcome for our honoured guests at the same time.

Pay up and look happy!

Another fortunate coincidence about today is that part of Neath's famous insignia is a Maltese Cross. And that is also the badge which one associates with the St. John Ambulance Brigade, which is just a crafty way of pointing out to you that today will see our annual collection for St. John, in recognition of the essential job they do for us in looking after our walking wounded, match after match.

In fact, we would be hard put to manage without them, and they deserve every penny we can dredge from the murkier recesses of our pockets for them. It's particularly important that we raise a goodly sum for them at this time, because their headquarters need a great deal of money spending on them, and it would be very nice if we could make a significant contribution to that worthy aim.

So dig deep chaps — and ladies. It would be difficult to imagine a better cause.

Thanks all round

Obviously, St. John merit our heartfelt thanks. But so do a great many other people today. It isn't everyone who wants to have their names mentioned, but even without actually identifying anyone, the list which deserves our gratitude is dauntingly long.

What about the lads who sell programmes, week after week? Or the chaps who man the turnstiles? Then there is the group who see us to our seats in the stands, and the stirring fellows who serve behind the bar.

Then there is the team which keeps the playing area in tip-top condition, the baggage people, the ladies who provide teas for the players, the members of various committees, the lads who operate the scoreboard, the car park attendants . . . and I'm sure I must have forgotten someone.

If so, I apologise, and can only plead encroaching senility. Please, however, take it for granted that we supporters really do appreciate the oceans of hard work which are necessary to keep Gloucester RFC in the forefront of English Rugby Football.

Thanks everyone! Hope we can count on you next season.

Coach to Twickenham

Apparently, so much interest has been expressed that there is a plot to run a coach from the Club to the John Player Final — to support Bristol, naturally. Let's face it, if we can't win, we'd as soon our West Country neighbours did as anyone.

I'm told that the Social Club expects the coach to leave at around ten, stop on the way, and leave immediately after the game. Cost £3.50, which can't be bad.

Terry Tandy is willing to order tickets direct from Twickenham — and if you get yours that way, the Club gets 10% of the takings, which would be acceptable. See Terry in the Office, and enquire about the coach in the bar.

Last call for the Appeal

Well — not the last, obviously, but the final progress report for this season. By the time we all return, the new facilities will be in operation, all being well, and John Bick is naturally anxious to get as much cash in as he can before the season ends.

The Fund, at the time of writing, stands at some £13,000, but John knows very well that, when every donation he has been promised duly arrives, he can count on a considerable increase in that figure. He, on behalf of the Club, particularly wants me to thank all the companies and individuals who have contributed to the interest-free loan scheme, at £600 and £250 respectively, but is equally grateful to those people who have made straightforward donations of whatever size.

Naturally, John's job is going to be more difficult in the close season, so if you know anyone — or any organisation — who might be persuaded to take part, please let John know about them. He'll do the rest.

Thanks to advertisers

Today's the day that we entertain all those public spirited people who have supported us by taking advertising space. They do represent a very useful income to the Club, and we are all very grateful to everyone. We sincerely hope that their generosity has resulted in hard, commercial advantages for them.

Thanks, everyone. We need, and appreciate, your help.

Colts International

This may be the last Gloucester match of the season, but it certainly isn't your last chance to see some good rugby here at Kingsholm. Next Saturday (April 16th) we are very pleased to be able to welcome the English and Welsh Colts XV's for their annual International game. Stand tickets are available at £2.00, which seems a doddle for a match of that class.

We keep hearing about a lack of class players in certain positions, but personally, I don't believe it. Next week sees your chance to see where the next Terry Holmeses and John Carletons are coming from.

There's a very good bonus too. Stay on after the match — no hardship with the bar open — and at 6 o'clock you'll be able to see the United taking their last bow of the Season. The opponents are Salisbury, and we thank them for agreeing to this slightly eccentric arrangement.

So that's that!

Seasons are like matches — you can't win 'em all. I suppose that after last year's triumphant campaign, there was bound to be some reaction. It's also worth noting that quite a few good-class clubs would be quite happy to have our results to look back on, this season.

Without wishing to 'whinge' in any way at all, luck didn't go our way. The succession of injuries, and other enforced absences, didn't do the side any good at all, and I can think of the odd game where the bounce of the ball could just have made all the difference. The old saying is still true; when you're on top, the luck goes with you. When you aren't — it doesn't.

Perhaps, on reflection, it won't do us too much harm to have lost out on next year's John Player. A season's breather for team building might pay dividends. Is cup rugby getting too important, perhaps?

Some good things did emerge. One or two useful players have made their mark, and haven't had time to reach their potential yet.

Next season, it's our job to get behind the side and give them all the support we can. It's easy to be a devoted fan when all is going well, but it's in times of adversity that you find out who your friends are.

Let's not end on a despondent note, however. The season has had its moments, and we still have an amazing amount of strength in depth, in most positions. My only query is, how on earth am I going to get through the summer, without going into withdrawal symptoms?

Tailpiece

Just one last thing to say. Best wishes to Steve Boyle and Malcolm Preedy in their respective roles in New Zealand. Best of luck to John Brain, and possibly one or two others, in their efforts to reach Romania.

And best of luck, everyone, for a relaxing and enjoyable close season. See you around. In September, if not before.

PETER ARNOLD