

Rugby Football Union



**THORN EMI
CHAMPIONSHIP**

**GLOUCESTERSHIRE
V
YORKSHIRE**

Saturday 12th November 1983

GLOUCESTER R.F.C.

Kingsholm Ground, Kingsholm Road, Gloucester

KICK OFF 2.45 p.m.

Cost of programme: 30p



THORN EMI COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP

GLoucestershire

Colours: Red, White Shorts

- 15 S. HOGG (Bristol)
- 14 A. MORLEY (Bristol)
- 13 R. KNIBBS (Bristol)
- 12 R. MOGG (Gloucester)
- 11 J. CARR (Bristol)
- 10 S. BARNES (Bristol)
- 9 R. HARDING (Bristol) Capt.
- 1 M. PREEDY (Gloucester)
- 2 S. MILLS (Gloucester)
- 3 P. BLAKEWAY (Gloucester)
- 4 J. FIDLER (Gloucester)
- 5 J. ORWIN (Gloucester)
- 6 J. GADD (Gloucester)
- 7 W. HONE (Bristol)
- 8 R. HESFORD (Bristol)

Replacements

- 16 K. WHITE (Gloucester)
- 17 R. WILMOT (Gloucester)

Touch Judge: A. E. G. WHITE (Gloucester Society)

- Full Backs
- Threequarters
- Right - Wing - Left
- Right - Centre - Left
- Left - Centre - Right
- Left - Wing - Right
- Half Backs
- Stand Off
- Scrum
- Forwards
- Prop
- Hooker
- Prop
- Lock
- Lock
- Blind Side
- Open Side
- No. 8

YORKSHIRE

Colours: White

- 15 D. NORTON (Headingley)
- 14 M. HARRISON (Wakefield)
- 13 S. TOWNEND (Wakefield)
- 12 S. BURNHILL (Roundhay)
- 11 R. UNDERWOOD (Middlesbrough)
- 10 A. OLD (Sheffield) Capt.
- 9 H. JAZYNA (Morley)
- 1 P. HUNTSMAN (Headingley)
- 2 B. COYNE (Middlesborough)
- 3 J. TINKER (Harrogate)
- 4 P. M. LOCKYER (Moseley)
- 5 R. WALTERS (Huddersfield)
- 6 S. TIPPING (Sale)
- 7 P. WINTERBOTTOM (Headingley)
- 8 P. BUCKTON (Liverpool)

Replacements

- 16 R. ADAMSON (Wakefield)
- 17 P. WOODHEAD (Morley)

Referee: R. PARKER (North Midlands Society)

Touch Judge: D. LUDLAN



Gloucestershire –
First winners of the
re-styled THORN EMI
Championship
with captain
Mike Rafter holding
the THORN EMI trophy

Fixtures for 1983/84

League 1		League 2	
GROUP 1 Devon Middlesex Somerset Lancashire	GROUP 2 Surrey Gloucestershire Yorkshire Northumberland	GROUP 1 Cheshire Cornwall Hertfordshire Kent	GROUP 2 Notts. Lincs. & Derbys, Durham Warwickshire North Midlands
FIXTURES		FIXTURES	
October 8th	Devon v Middlesex at Torquay Somerset v Lancashire at Bath Surrey v Gloucestershire at Sunbury Yorkshire v Northumberland at Otley	October 8th	Cheshire v Cornwall at New Brighton Hertfordshire v Kent at Croxley Green Notts. Lincs. & Derbys. v Durham at Nottingham Warwickshire v North Midlands at Rugby
October 22nd	Devon v Somerset at Exeter Middlesex v Lancashire at Sudbury Northumberland v Gloucestershire at Gosforth Yorkshire v Surrey at Headingley	October 22nd	Hertfordshire v Cheshire at Croxley Green Kent v Cornwall at Blackheath North Midlands v Durham at Stourbridge Warwickshire v Notts. Lincs. & Derbys. at Nuneaton
November 12th	Gloucestershire v Yorkshire at Gloucester Lancashire v Devon at Fylde Somerset v Middlesex at Bridgwater Surrey v Northumberland at Sunbury	November 12th	Cheshire v Kent at Birkenhead Park Cornwall v Hertfordshire at Redruth Durham v Warwickshire at Hartlepool Rovers Notts. Lincs. & Derbys v North Midlands at Nottingham
November 26th	(Semi-finals) Winners of Group 1 v Runners-up of Group 2 Winners of Group 2 v Runners-up of Group 1 The bottom two sides in each Group will also play off for the two relegation places in the League.	November 26th	Winners of Group 1 v Runners-up of Group 2 Winners of Group 2 v Runners-up of Group 1 The bottom two sides in each Group will also play off for the two relegation places in the League.
March 31st 1984	(Final) Between the winners of the semi-finals.		

REPEATING THE DOSE

Late in the 1981/2 season, Gloucestershire entertained Lancashire, in the THORN-EMI County Championship Semi-Final, here at Kingsholm. The home side lost, deservedly, and partly because a strong wind in the first half enabled Lancashire to pile up a 13 point lead. This proved too big a handicap in the second period.

That very good Lancashire side went on to win a well-merited title. So what has that to do with today's little seminar?

Simply this. Lancashire didn't have it all their own way on the road to Kingsholm, having been beaten by Yorkshire in an earlier round, so one could say that the East-of-Pennine boys were here in spirit that day, if not in actuality.

Perhaps this does put the whole thing into perspective. Even though this is the first visit that Yorkshire have made to Kingsholm for a very long time, they have always been there or thereabouts, a fact that tended to become obscured under the old system.

To be parochial, Somerset could make the same sort of claim, having been one of the few winners over Gloucestershire in recent years, but never quite making the later rounds. Results so far this season are tending to put that particular injustice right as well.

A quick look at the record will show you that there have only been four occasions since 1969 when Gloucestershire have not been in the Final. While Yorkshire can't claim that sort of recent pedigree, they would be justified in saying that all that is history, and doesn't have much bearing once things start happening out in the middle.

As everyone on the ground today must know, we are today being treated to a repeat dose of the medicine we were prescribed last year - and if all medication were that pleasant, the National Health Service would be under more strain than it is at the moment. Last year, we saw a fine final, and there doesn't seem any reason why today's game shouldn't be at least as good. A few faces have changed, but the two teams are essentially the same as those which contested the Championship last season, and in Rugby Football, familiarity doesn't breed contempt, so much as a healthy respect.

Even if we stick with the historical approach, there doesn't look to be too much between the teams. Gloucestershire's successes in the various forms of County Championship may have received more publicity, over the years, but, in fact, Yorkshire were the first County Champions of all, back in 1889, and retained the title for five out of the first six years. In total, Gloucestershire have won 14 Championships, and Yorkshire are runners-up with 10, so the disparity isn't that great.

To come back to the present, you couldn't really have two sides with more similar records or the season. Both sides made a comprehensive job of seeing off Surrey. Both sides struggled a bit to beat the tough Northumberland team, with its solid nucleus of Gosforth players.

Will home advantage prove decisive? Or will the experience of having played Gloucestershire twice in the last twelve months have given Yorkshire an unexpected wrinkle or two. It's anyone's guess - but whatever happens, we can be sure of a hard-fought game, full of skill and commitment.

Which is all anyone can ever expect, from any two sides.

WELCOME TO KINGSHOLM

There are always a great number of people who one would wish to welcome, on an occasion such as this. We're obviously delighted to see the Yorkshire players and officials, some of whom will have visited Kingsholm before, in their club capacities, but are nonetheless welcome for that.

We're also glad to welcome three people who often get forgotten, namely the man with the whistle and the two chaps with flags. Unless they do their job properly, you simply don't get a good game of rugby.

Finally, every single supporter is very welcome too. Many of them will be Kingsholm regulars - a very special breed of supporter - some will have forsaken their own Gloucestershire clubs to come along, and there will, as always, be some people who don't support any club regularly, but do follow the County.

Finally there will be the hardest breed of all. Those loyal souls who have trekked all the way from Yorkshire to cheer their side on with Northern gusto.

Everyone is most heartily welcome. Players love to have a good, noisy crowd, and it wouldn't be the same without you.

AND FROM GLOUCESTER R.F.C.

The Gloucester Club ask me to add their welcome to the 'official' ones printed above. A County game here at Kingsholm is always a special occasion, and bearing in mind the events of last year, this one more so than most. From all of us 'Elver Eaters', a hearty welcome to all of you.

THANKS TO THE SPONSORS

One special group of people whom don't feature in the welcomes so far, is the very senior representation we have here today from the THORN EMI organisation. Their impact on the County Championship, and therefore on English rugby generally, has been enormous. Indeed, it's a moot point whether there would be a Championship without them.

After years of controversy, a new structure for the Competition has emerged, and everyone seems to agree that it's an improvement on the old one. This season, the Final is where it always ought to have been - on the hallowed turf of Twickenham.

It's permissible to speculate if either of those things would have happened had a Sponsorship so considerable as that provided by THORN EMI had not been made so generously available.

My own opinion is that the County Championship is now, and should be, the premier competition in the English game. It's a shame that one or two people at Club level don't see it that way, but if it becomes the natural stepping stone to the England squad which it deserves to be, then perhaps those opinions could change.

Just one more commercial thought. We're not all that far from Christmas, and it's a lucky bloke who gets away with the Festive Season without being induced into parting with cash to buy something electrical for someone-or-other's Christmas present.

Well - as a good rugby man, you know who your friends are. Point taken?

Many thanks, THORN EMI Heartfelt welcomes to all of you, and to your guests. We'd have trouble managing without you.

BEST OF LUCK!

At the time of writing the South and South West side to face the redoubtable All Blacks at Bristol next Tuesday, hasn't been finally selected, but it seems virtually certain that Gloucestershire will be well represented.

Whoever has that, somewhat painful, honour, perhaps our friends from Yorkshire will join us in wishing them the very best of luck, and a game to remember. No doubt a lot of supporters, here today, will be at that match too - don't forget it's an afternoon game!

CLUBHOUSE

Gloucester R.F.C. ask me to point out to their own Members that they won't be able to get into the clubhouse, after the match, unless they have their Social Club Membership cards with them. Quite apart from the scrum which is likely to develop, there are, after all, laws about that sort of thing.

COLIN SIBERY

For the second time in a row, I have the sad duty of recording the passing of a valued servant of Gloucestershire rugby in a County programme. Following the loss of the much-missed Dai Walter, last season, comes the news of the death, at a tragically early age, of Colin Sibery.

Colin would, in a couple of years time, have served as President of Gloucestershire R.F.U., and an extremely good job he would have made of it, too, but perhaps it is his untiring work in the field of Colts rugby which will be remembered for the longest time.

I was lucky enough to know Colin for many years (in fact, I was at school with him), so I am in a good position to say that he was a nice man, a gentle-man, in all senses of the word. Our sympathies go to his family and wide circle of friends.

Perhaps (this being Colin's 'home' ground), those Gloucestershire players on view today, who came through the Colts ranks, might like to feel they're playing this one for Colin. He'd have liked that.

PETER ARNOLD