



**GLOUCESTER**  
**V.**  
**BIRKENHEAD P.**

**EASTER MONDAY**  
**31st MARCH, 1986**  
**Kick-off 3 p.m.**



FOUNDED 1873

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**GLOUCESTER** (4)

(Cherry & White)

Full Back *W P Smith*  
 15. **S. Lazenby** *T Smith*

Three Quarters  
 14. **T. Ford**  
 13. **R. McLean**  
 12. **R. Mogg**  
 11. **N. Price**

Half Backs  
 10. **M. Evans**  
 9. **R. Williams**

Forwards  
 † 1. **M. Preedy (Capt.)**  
 2. **G. Mann**  
 3. **R. Phillips**  
 4. **D. Burn** *N SCRIVENS*  
 5. **J. Etheridge**  
 6. **J. Bennett** *MP*  
 7. **I. Smith**  
 8. **L. Cummins**

REPLACEMENTS  
 T. Smith *M SMITH*  
 S. Ashmead

**BIRKENHEAD PARK** (3)

Full Back  
 15. **J. McHugh** *A CHAPMAN*

Three Quarters  
 14. **P. McShane**  
 13. **M. Ferguson**  
 12. **A. Chapman** *R SOLEBY*  
 11. **L. Jackson**

Half Backs  
 10. **P. Dobbing** *J McHUGH*  
 9. **M. McNally** *CP*

Forwards  
 1. **J. Cairns** *M DAVIS*  
 2. **P. Hackett**  
 3. **R. Bold**  
 4. **C. Plummer**  
 5. **P. McCrane** *P SREVILLE*  
 6. **N. Powell (Capt.)** *P MCCRANE E*  
 7. **N. Thomson**  
 8. **C. Wainwright**

REPLACEMENTS  
 A. Durack *M McSHANE*  
 P. Greville *A WILCOX*

Referee: **K. MAHON** (Warwickshire Society) *T ASHMORE (70 003)*

† International

**Good luck to one special team from another!**



**Richard Cound**

BMW in Gloucestershire

### **Not a Black Monday!**

Do you always have a feeling of getting away with something when you turn up at Kingsholm on a Monday — that little voice that tells you that you should be working?

If so, any guilt pangs will shortly be dispelled by the sight of our old friends from Merseyside, running out on the sacred turf. And I'm told that there is no truth in the rumour that Derek Hatton will be turning out on the left wing for Birkenhead Park, today.

Be that as it may, it's always good to see a side which only visits us every other year or so, and it's particularly pleasing when they turn up as part of the Easter holiday programme.

The last time 'Park' paid us a visit, they returned home the worse off by 42 points to nil, and that was a little peculiar, because they had already beaten London Scottish (!), Wasps, Sale and Orrel that year. Which must prove something or other, even if I can't work out what.

The red, white and blue hoops are always very welcome, of course, and never more so than now, when we've been starved of decent Rugby for an indecently long period. We all hope that the journey proves worthwhile for the Merseysiders — at least, we can categorically state that it will, in terms of hospitality, if nothing else.

Anything can happen at Easter, and today's visitors will be trying hard to make sure that it does.

Have a great visit, chaps!

### **Well Done Lydney!**

Hearty congratulations to Lydney on winning the good old County Cup.

One thing's for sure — with Berry Hill and Lydney in next season's John Player Competition, Gloucestershire will have the benefit of two experienced sides — quite apart from Gloucester — who have already proved that they're a force to be reckoned with in Cup Rugby. And, if you doubt that, ask Bath about Berry Hill, and Sale about Lydney.

Best of luck to both sides for next season's campaign. All they need now is a couple of good draws.

Can you imagine Leicester on Berry Hill's ground?

### **Merit Table**

At the time of writing, the Headingley game has not been played, but assuming that we won that one — and we're in trouble if we didn't — then the fate of the John Smith's Merit Table 'A' will rest, to a very large extent, on the Gloucester v. Sale game, at Sale, on April 19th.

Again, making the large assumption that we accounted for Headingley, then a win over Sale would give us the Table, free and clear. Nottingham provide the fly half in the ointment, so to speak.

Gloucester have already lost to Harlequins, and beaten Bath, Leicester, Moseley, London Scottish and Bristol in the Table. Our fixture with Nottingham fell victim to the weather, unfortunately, or we might be home and dried by now.

Nottingham don't play as many Merit Table fixtures as we do, and they only need to come unstuck once to disappear from the scene. Of course, if we can put it across Sale, then all that's academic.

It would be nice to win the thing in the first season, wouldn't it? After all, we did win the first knock-out cup ever, whatever may have happened since.

### **Neath Next**

One of the highlights of the tag-end of the Season is that we have a late fixture against Neath, who are arguably the most attractive side in Wales, these days. It's our good fortune that it's their turn to come here, this year, on April 12th, one week next Saturday, as ever was.

Having been deprived of a fair amount of good home Rugby by the weather and Cup considerations, you'll want to make up for things by coming along — if only to see if Jonathan Davies and Paul Thornburn really are eight feet tall, as this season's events seem to imply they are.

Before that, however, we have a tricky trip to Moseley, next Saturday, and it could be worth while girding the loins and making the trip to the Reddings. Of course, if you don't want to do that, then there would be adequate compensation in coming along to Kingsholm to see United take on their opposite numbers from Moseley.

The season's not over yet, by any means.

#### **Attention Sponsors and Advertisers**

Advance notice to all those wonderful souls who have sponsored games, or participated in the various forms of advertising we have available this season, April 26th is that annual beanfeast, the occasion when we lay on some modest hospitality to say 'thanks' for your generosity during the season.

We wouldn't wish your diaries to get so congested that you miss out, so hence the advance notice. See you there.

And of course, if any other organisation has ideas about next season, then you'd better contact Peter Denham fairly quickly. It's amazing how quickly fixtures get snapped up these days.

#### **Watch This Space**

In case anyone's wondering, at the time of writing, we don't have final information about the various local cup competitions yet, so can't quite give you the dates. All being well, we'll have everything sorted in time for the Neath programme.

#### **Tailpiece**

Now the answer to the quiz question I left you with on Saturday. For the benefit of anyone who wasn't here, I invited answers to the query, "Who was the last England Cricket Captain to play Rugby for Gloucester?"

Trying the thing out beforehand, I had an amazing range of answers, ranging from W. G. Grace, through Grahame Parker (who would be flattered) to Mike Smith. All, of course, wrong.

The answer is that amiable Welshman, Tony Lewis, who we still see fairly frequently, pursuing his journalistic career. Although remembered basically as a Neath player, he turned out at full back for Gloucester during the 1958/59 season, while stationed at RAF Innsworth. Afterwards, of course, he went on to achieve the considerable feat of being one of the very few England Cricket Captains to win a series in India. Not even Jardine (Douglas, not Richard) managed that.

If you want proof, or would like to know more, I would recommend Tony's very pleasant autobiography to you, published recently, and titled 'Playing Days'. It's a very good read, and allots a couple of pages to his period with, what he himself calls, 'Glos.'

He's even published a team photograph of the cherry-and-white side he played for, and it includes such stalwarts as Tom Day, Brian ('Grunter') Green and Cyril Thomas. There are also anecdotes about 'Willy' Jones, in his role as a Glamorgan cricketer.

I happen to know that the County Library has the book, available for loan. Well — you didn't think I'd buy one, did you?

See you at the Neath game.

PETER ARNOLD.

*Front Cover Cathedral Photograph reproduced by Courtesy of Gloucester City Council.*