



**PONTYPRIDD  
RUGBY  
FOOTBALL  
CLUB**



**LUCKY  
PROGRAMME**

**Nº 402  
£10.00**

**Pontypridd**

VERSUS

**Gloucester**

**PROGRAMME**

**25P**

on Saturday 20th September 1986  
Kick off 3.00pm

# CLUB NOTES

This afternoon, the visitors to Sardis Road are one of the greatest of the English Clubs, namely Gloucester, and it is a privilege and a pleasure to have them at Sardis Road for the first time in two years, since we only play them once a year on a home and away basis.

Although we have not beaten them over the past two years, initially we had a very successful run of wins against them and we are hoping that we can once again produce a home victory. However, the reputation of the Gloucester pack is such that we know that it will not be an easy game today and if a victory can be obtained, it will be only by dint of first class scrummaging and first time tackling for starters.

Although we cannot number Gloucester amongst our oldest fixtures, there is, nevertheless, a warm feeling between the Clubs, since we find on going to Kingsholme that we are always met with great warmth and hospitality and we trust that today our visitors will feel the same, when they leave Sardis Road, whether they win or lose.

On the home front, what can one say after the defeat by the South Wales Police last Monday at Waterton Cross. In the words of the immortal someone "after the Lord Mayor's Show comes the \*\*\*\*", and this was certainly the case following one of the heaviest defeats of Cross Keys for many years last Saturday. The side showed glimpses of great promise in the three-quarters, but even after that game there were mutterings about the weakness of our scrummaging and this weakness was certainly shown to the full by the Police who drove us back for almost the entirety of the game and was the prime reason for their prominence throughout most of it, although in fairness to Pontypridd, they fought back manfully from time to time. The telling blow came when they were losing 13-6 but attacking in the Police's 25 when a dropped ball in the centre allowed Mark Brinkworth to kick the ball the entire length of the field and win the touch down. The try was converted and suddenly it was 19-6 and the game was all over. However, all credit to Pontypridd that they still gave 100% and the three-quarters when they got the ball showed some fine touches. However, until the scrummaging weakness can be eradicated, we are going to be under considerable pressure and with games against Cardiff next Wednesday and Neath the following Saturday, it must be eradicated immediately, if possible.

On the injury front, we are delighted to report that Andy Carpenter, who was carried off at the Llanelli game, has not suffered any serious injury, for which the Lord be praised, and hopes to start training shortly. Marco Orsi who came off towards the end of the Police game and who, it was thought, had fractured his leg, has, in fact, badly torn ligaments and does not know how long he will be out of the game. As the only recognised loose-head in the squad, his injury in particular will cause considerable problems to coach Bill Griffiths and his selectors. We hope that both will recover quickly.

It was with great sadness that we read last week that former player of the year, Robert Davies, no longer figures in Pontypool's scheme of things, having eventually left us towards the end of last summer, despite advice given to him. Unfortunately for Robert, he did not heed the advice and now ends up at this moment in time without a Club. We sincerely hope that he will resume his promising rugby career without delay and, of course, he is always welcome to try his luck again at Pontypridd, where he would certainly not start as Number 1 as Hugh Woodland and Andy Matthews, to name but two, have proved their worth in the first two weeks of the season, and there is no doubt that if Robert did return he would have to fight very hard for his place, with no guarantee of success. The sad story of Robert Davies only goes to show that Club loyalty is still something to be valued and the players who go to other Clubs with a reputation do not necessarily make the grade in those Clubs. Of course, the problem of players moving to the so called "glamorous" Clubs is caused in the main by the failure of the National Selectors to give a fair crack of the whip to all the leading Clubs. As there are five National Selectors and no more than 19 first class Clubs, it should be possible for a Selector to attend at least once every three weeks at every one of these Clubs, but we at Pontypridd well know, the appearance of a Selector is a matter of amazement instead of something that occurs in the normal course of events. Again, the press play their part. Mark Rowley as an example, joins Cardiff and within a week is a world-beater and Gary Jones goes to Llanelli and gets a B Cap. Neither player was any better or any worse at Pontypridd but received no recognition and felt that a change of Clubs was the only way to further their careers and, of course, when it actually happens, it encourages other players to do the same. Robert Davies' story however shows that a change of Club is not always the best thing and if players remained loyal to their Clubs, then, eventually, both the press and the Selectors would be forced to acknowledge them. Let us hope that this happens sooner than later.

Finally, we would like to thank Just Rentals (Wales) Limited of Tonypany and Mr. Bernard Jones, in particular, for their sponsorship of today's game. Sponsorship is one of the lifelines of the Club and although most of the games this season have been sponsored, there are several still lacking a sponsor and if anyone so wishes to sponsor a game, would they please contact Mr. Barry Griffiths, or any other member of the Sponsorship Committee.

Finally, we would also like to thank Western Welding and Engineering Limited of Barry who are today's Match Ball Sponsors.

The next home game is versus Cardiff, our great rivals, on Wednesday next, September 24th, kick-off 7.00p.m. Please note the change of kick-off time for this game due to the fact that the B.B.C. are televising the match and require a little extra light time.

## Pontypridd

15	JONATHAN MASON	FULL BACK
14	PHIL HOPE	RIGHT WING
13	MIKE CUSHION	RIGHT CENTRE
12	DAVID CONWAY	LEFT CENTRE
11	CLAYTON HOWELLS	LEFT WING
10	ASHLEY REES	OUTSIDE HALF
9	HUW WOODLAND	SCRUM HALF
1	MARK PHILLIPS	PROP
2	PHIL JOHN	HOKKER
3	ROBERT STEPHENS	PROP
4	STEVE BAIN	LOCK
5	BLEDDYN DAVIES	LOCK
6	MIKE BUTTS	FLANKER
7	ADRIAN HOPE	FLANKER
8	KERI WILLIAMS (Capt)	No.8

### Replacements

Andy Mathews, Wayne Davies

## Gloucester

	TIM SMITH	15
	DEREK MORGAN	14
	BOB MORGAN	13
	MARK SMITH	12
	NICK PRICE	11
	MIKE HAMLIN (Capt.)	10
	JULIAN DAVIS	9
	PETE JONES	1
	KEVIN WHITE	2
	BOB PHILLIPS	3
	DICK BURN	4
	PAUL WALLACE	5
	JEREMY BENNETT	6
	IAN SMITH	7
	LAURIE CUMMINS	8

### Replacements

Richard Williams, Jeff Cole

Referee: Mr. D. O. HUGHES (Newbridge)

Today's Match is sponsored by Just Rentals (Wales) Ltd.

The Match Ball is sponsored by Western Welding and Engineering Co.

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# Rod's Chit Chat

## A VIRTUE OF NECESSITY?

Writing after our defeat at Waterton Cross, I think we have now seen enough to be able to put a tentative finger on some of our strengths and weaknesses. It seems to me that behind the scrum we shall prove to be fast and inventive, even perhaps displaying some of the 'damned Welsh cunning' that used to curl the moustaches of the old guard in the very early days of the game. Up front, while play is mobile and the ball flying around, we will get by. In the set pieces, where strength and weight are at a premium, we may struggle. This, of course, is the famous 'good news and bad news' syndrome, the basis of so many anecdotes down the years. It is a bit disquieting to consider that today's visitors, Gloucester, that massive rugby presence forever sternly glaring over the Severn at us, are usually blessed with an alarming poundage of beef in their front eight. Rarely indeed does a Gloucester team take the field, resplendent in their famous cherry and white, without two or three Goliaths among their number. You could usually close your eyes and still be able to tell when they run out on the field by the trembling of the grandstand under the combined pressure of the pounding of size fourteens and the cries of greeting from their famous supporters. Life is never easy or dull when playing these West Countrymen, physique and wits sharpened by centuries of strife and turmoil against the Welsh in particular. We have no reason to think that it will be any different today - indeed, as I write I hear of Gloucester's decisive win over the Wanderers, a win that speaks volumes for their season's prospects, since Wanderers are nowadays - quite justly - thought of as one of our premier sides. The good news is that we shall be forced to do what we are best at - improvise! Monday's game gave us eighty minutes worth of experience of how to play when up against it in terms of set-piece ball winning. Though severely beaten, we were by the end giving signs that we were learning how to cope with the situation, even at times how to turn it to our advantage. Today's game will show whether we can build on that foundation.

## PRIME SUPPORTER

Do you remember, at the tail end of last season, my writing about the world's No. 1 Supporter, a Mr Jeremy Bellhouse, who travels from Herefordshire to support Ponty and what's more, never misses a match? Such devotion, especially in the face of last year's result, merited at least the George Cross, I thought, and the Club agreed with me because while the George Cross is, unfortunately, not within their gift, they did present Mr Bellhouse with a Club tie in a delightful little ceremony in the Player's Lounge after the last match. I have now received a letter from Mr

Bellhouse entitled 'Thanks from Symonds Yat' which reads as follows -

*"Thank you for your article at the end of last season, and for the chance to reply. I have always received a very warm welcome at Sardis Road, and I have enjoyed both the company and the rugby, if not always the results! Still, anybody can support a winning team. My thanks to the Club for their presentation and to everyone for their friendship. I hope to carry on supporting the Club for many years to come. Good luck to the boys for a successful season."*

**Jeremy Bellhouse**

I also had the pleasure of meeting Mr Bellhouse, and far from being a wild-eyed visionary with a screw loose, he is a most urbane and charming person who first watched Ponty play a few seasons ago when we were top of the tree, liked what he saw, and saw no reason to change his allegiance or his watching habits when the pendulum swung against us. This surely is positive supporting, not merely going through the motions, like a swimmer at Barry. All virtue earns its due reward in this world or the next, and it is plain that Mr Bellhouse's reward would be a resurgence in our fortunes. Let us all hope that this will come about very soon, in order that his lonely trip for each home game will be lightened by great expectations rather than soured by hard times.

## HIGH JINKS UP THE ROAD!

I see Treorchy are celebrating their Centenary with an almighty bang, having seen off Newbridge and Abertillery, and are ready for S.W. Police and Bridgend, and with their batteries fully charged, I would not be a bit surprised to see these two biting the dust, or mud, according to the weather. Supporters will need no reminding that Pontypridd travel to Treorchy a little later on to celebrate their centennial year, and it will give away no secrets to say that ours is the scalp Treorchy would cherish most of all. Bearing in mind Treorchy's noted hospitality and their penchant for forcing strong liquor on their visitors - a fact I discovered to my cost after our titanic cup-round there - this will be an occasion that our supporters will not want to miss, if only to gain an impression of how the Christians must have felt during their fixtures against the lions in the Colosseum. Here's our chance, in any event, to wish a very happy and successful Centenary year to our near neighbours, from whom we have had some great players over the years, and to assure them that we will turn up on the night, fully prepared both for the game, and for the celebrations.

**R.T.**