

**JOHN SMITH'S  
MERIT TABLES**

**GLOUCESTER**

**V.**

**BRISTOL**

**SATURDAY**

**27th SEPTEMBER, 1986**

**Kick-off 3 p.m.**

**Sponsored by**

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### GLOUCESTER

(Cherry & White)

Full Back

15. N. Marment

Three Quarters

14. J. Breeze

13. P. Taylor

12. R. MacLean

11. R. Mogg

Half Backs

10. M. Hamlin

9.

Forwards

† 1. M. Preedy (Capt.)

2. K. Dunn

3. R. Pascall

4. N. Scrivens

5. J. Brain

6. B. Fowke

7. A. Stanley

† 8. M. Teague

REPLACEMENTS

P. Kingston †

G. Mann

### BRISTOL

(Blue & White)

Full Back

A. B. Whitehead

Three Quarters

B. H. Duggan

C. C. Knibbs

D. S. Hogg

E. J. Carr

Half Backs

F. D. Thomas

† G. R. Harding

Forwards

H. P. Stiff

I. K. Bogira

J. P. Smith

K. N. Pomphry (Capt)

L. P. Adams

M. D. Eyes

N. P. Miles

O. P. Pollcori

REPLACEMENTS

P. M. Tainton

Q. N. Hutton

Referee: C. LITTLE (London Society)

† International

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



# Richard Cound

BMW in Gloucestershire

### **Ever Get The Feeling You've Been Here Before?**

Welcome to our first home John Smith's Merit Table match of the season, Gloucester having already lost the first away game to Coventry. Well, at least we've made a better start than we did last year.

Gloucester v. Bristol has now entered the mythology of Rugby Football, ranking quite easily with soccer's Liverpool v. Everton or cricket's Lancashire v. Yorkshire. And that's not local opinion — even Coventry and England's Peter Robins told a slightly scurrilous story on the subject at last season's John Smith's Merit Table dinner. I'll repeat it, one day when I have space.

There was a time when you could reckon on the result going with home advantage, but that trend has petered out over the past few seasons. In 1983, for example, we won at Bristol by 19 points to 12 on the equivalent Saturday to this one, and then saw the return match in February weathered off and never rearranged. The following year we lost at home (9-16) and also came second at Bristol (0-3).

Last season was peculiar. Today's equivalent match was called off because of our early entry into the John Player. On January 25th we met Bristol here at Kingsholm, and won a thriller, 7-4. Just six nights later Gloucester cantered home in a Merit Table game, also at Kingsholm, in a comparative romp, 21-6.

All of which is interesting, but has very little bearing on anything which may happen today. Mike ('The Grafter') Rafter, now firmly in the coaching saddle, has welded a side which murdered Cardiff a week or two ago, and gave Swansea a helluva fright last Saturday. Conversely, Gloucester has had a chequered start, partly due to a nasty attack of scrum halftis, and partly to the need for the Selectors to explore the genuinely exciting talent which has emerged this season in almost every position on the field. 'T'ain't easy.

So today's game bristles with speculation and intriguing possibility. Anything, as they say, could happen.

One thing which assuredly will happen is that the Bristol lads will receive the traditional Kingsholm welcome which they have always merited here. You have to look after your old mates, don't you? Even if they have just spent 80 enthusiastic minutes trying to reduce you to your component parts.

Great to see you again, lads.

### **Thanks to Bill and Nan**

We've always very grateful to Sponsors, of course, but today I have a particularly nice piece of support to report. Our old friends Bill and Nan Iddles have generously donated a match ball, a very pleasant gesture indeed, for which we thank them, most sincerely.

Bill is, of course, in his usual fine form, and Nan's many friends will be glad to know that she's very cheerful, and even hoping to come along to a game later in the season.

Thanks again, both. The Club would be the poorer, in more ways than one without you.

### **Telecom Today**

Once again, British Telecom are "delighted" (and I quote BT's Roger Lindsey") to sponsor the home game against Bristol. We're delighted they're delighted, and even more delighted by the fact that this is the first of two Kingsholm matches which will receive the generous support of our friendly, neighbourhood smoke-signal specialists this season.

In fact, Gloucester v. Bristol is something of a Civil War for Telecom, as both great Clubs fall into their Severnside District. This means that both teams will receive very vocal support from various sections of our Sponsor's guest list today.

Today marks something of a landmark for British Telecom on Severnside. Only yesterday, the new 'System X' Digital trunk System came into operation, and is now handling the vast majority of the long distance calls made from Gloucester and the surrounding districts. If you are somewhat underwhelmed by that information — you shouldn't be. The new system already has a capacity to handle 60,000 calls every hour, and will be handling 144,000 calls per hour by the end of the year. And that's a fair number of 'It's For Yoo-hoos'.

About 60 such systems, nationwide, will be operational within a few months, and the whole national network is due for completion in 1988. Now you can see where BT's annual £2 billion capital investment goes.

Nowadays, you can sit at home and dial direct to 600 million people around the world. No other national communications system can even approach that figure.

But they still have time and imagination to sponsor a couple of Kingsholm matches, a fact for which we are extremely grateful.

Hope you have a great day, people!

### **Takes All Sorts . . .**

. . . to make a world, they say, and we've had a couple of good examples, recently.

You'll hardly credit it, but a couple of characters were detected, not long ago, passing their membership cards out for their mates to get in free. Quite frankly, this is theft. Even worse, if the practice became widespread, it would result in an increase of everyone's subs.

Not unnaturally, the Club takes a very dim view of that. Terry Tandy asks me to say that anyone caught doing it will lose his card. For ever. And quite right too.

There is a much brighter story, however. At the Munster game, an honest fellow found a wallet containing over £60, which had obviously been accidentally dropped. He handed it in to Terry Tandy, and stood not upon the order of his going, without even leaving his name.

The rightful owner duly arrived, was able to prove ownership, and was reunited with his wallet, his £60 and everything else which was his. He would therefore like to thank the honest finder, who is obviously too modest to identify himself.

Restores your faith, doesn't it?

### **Lucky Programme**

People who know about these things, tell me that three sevens is an unbeatable poker hand. The number 777 didn't prove too unlucky for Mr. J. Mills of 94, Innsworth Lane, either. It was the number on his programme for the Munster match.

Incidentally, this is the first time I've had a chance to thank Tyre Sales of 1a Kingsholm Road for their continuing, and imaginative generosity in donating the funds for the Lucky Programme prizes. Thanks chaps.

### **Could Be a Dry Night**

. . . unless you've got your Social Club Membership card. If you haven't, you won't get into the Clubhouse for a drink. This does not, of course, apply to card-carrying Bristol members.

Well — you were warned!

### **Bedford Next Week**

Wonder if John Orwin will come next Saturday? That being October 4th, Patrons Cards will have ceased to be valid without the official receipt, and the date for applications for International tickets will have passed, the deadline for both events being September 30th. Better get your skates on if either process had slipped your memory.

### **Tailpiece**

Another thing occurs to me about next Saturday. By then, Gloucester, in common with most other major Clubs, will have played 10 matches. There is a Japanese touring side here, and Munster has just finished their two-match visit.

Yet we've had no 'Rugby Special' on BBC 2. This, following last season's reduction in running time, plus eccentric timing over the past few seasons, entitles one to wonder what 'Auntie' BBC is play at.

Explanations about a small audience, relative to hooligan-ridden soccer, just won't wash. Of course you get a smaller number of viewers for a programme which is mucked about so much. Anyway, the World Chess Championship, worthy though it is, has received quite adequate coverage — and you're not telling me that it would have attracted a bigger audience than — say — highlights of Bristol v. Gloucester or Munster v. Pontypool.

I never did like monopolies. Perhaps the Government should float a BBC share issue, issue, similar to those for British Telecom and TSB.

PETER ARNOLD.

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