



**GLOUCESTER  
UNITED  
V.  
EXETER UNITED**

**SATURDAY  
25th APRIL, 1987  
Kick-off 3.00 p.m.**



FOUNDED 1873

**GLOUCESTER RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB**

**Kingsholm**

**PRESIDENT:  
CANON H. M. HUGHES B.A.**

**OFFICIAL PROGRAMME 20p**

The Winner of today's  
Official Programme  
Draw will receive  
**£5** from

**Tyre Sales**  
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### GLOUCESTER UNITED

(Cherry & White)

Full Back

15. P. Mansell

Three Quarters

14. T. Smith

13. M. Smith

12. C. Dyke

11. P. Tunstall

Half Backs

10. D. Pointon (Capt.)

9. L. Gardner

Forwards

1. P. Jones

2. K. White

3. R. Phillips

4. P. Wallace

5. J. Etheridge

6. J. Bennett

7. M. Longstaff

8. D. Roper

REPLACEMENTS

D. Broady

D. Churchill

### EXETER UNITED

(All Black)

Full Back

15. G. Brooks

Three Quarters

14. S. Williams

13. S. Tutchings

12. G. Trelawny

11. L. Fowler

Half Backs

10. R. Veale

9. G. Hexter

Forwards

1. G. West

2. M. Gibbons

3. J. Sussex

4. D. Hartland

5. M. Skidmore

6. R. Mears

7. E. Newman

8. A. Latham

REPLACEMENTS

Referee: D. GRAY (Manchester Society)

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



# Richard Cound

BMW in Gloucestershire

### Unique Occasion

Isn't it great? To sit here burning the midnight oil (because no one told me they wanted a programme), is almost a privilege, given the circumstances. I say 'almost' purely because it doesn't look as if I'm going to get down to the pub tonight — and I can't think of many occasions when I would have made that sacrifice quite so gladly.

To go through a season unbeaten, until the final match, is an achievement for any side, in any class of rugby. For a United side to do it, bedevilled as they are with team changes and the calls of the First XV is little short of mind-boggling.

And it's very pleasant that Exeter are the opponents for this unique event. Old Kingsholm hands will remember several momentous occasions when Exeter have shared the limelight on the last game of the season, especially when Gloucester have had something to celebrate. Remember the time when skipper John Watkins paraded the John Player Cup around the ground on just such a day?

We said 'goodbye' to the great Mike Burton, that day too. I can recall him standing in front of the stand and weeping quite unashamedly at the reception he received, and at the thought that he wouldn't be wearing the cherry-and-white strip in anger again.

I don't suppose we'll see any tears from Dave Pointon, or any of his stalwarts today. It's a thoroughly happy occasion, and a chance for all of us to show some appreciation to a great side which has entertained us, royally and consistently, as well as pulling off some remarkable victories.

Our thanks to the Exeter lads for coming this far, ensuring that United can end their season at Kingsholm, rather than on any lesser ground. It would have been a pity if they had just had to drift off into the sunset, rather than finishing in style. And that they'll do, win or lose.

### Record?

You will have seen press reports which indicate that the previous best season by a United side was one in which they suffered just three defeats. It was interesting, therefore, to read a letter in the 'Citizen' from a Mr. Bloxsome, whose father, Fred skippered the Gloucester second string side when they recorded only one defeat, and that against Newport. What's more, Mr. Bloxsome has an engraved silver cigarette case to commemorate the event.

Fine. But it must be said that the side was known as "Gloucester 'A'" in those days, so to be thoroughly accurate, the 1986/7 side is the first United side to get this far without defeat.

But let's not quibble. If anything could have made 'Pointon's Pirates' even more determined to win today, it must be the fact that there is yet another record to beat.

### For The Future

Records are one thing. But it must be true that the primary function of a United side is to 'blood' young players, allow selectors and others to assess their potential, and generally make sure that there is a good supply of young talent, waiting in the wings against the day when senior players hang up their boots, move away, or suffer some other calamity, such as matrimony, for example.

If that's the criterion we should use, then the United is an even more successful outfit than the results would seem to indicate. Several highly promising new faces have become very much part of the Kingsholm scene this season, and indeed, some, like Andrew Stanley and Royston Morgan, have already made their mark in the First XV ranks.

And don't forget — there is quite a bunch of players who are not yet playing regularly for United who will undoubtedly take their chances with both boots when they are offered.

As a not inexperienced observer of the doings of Gloucester RFC at all levels, I would be hard put to it to remember a time when we have so many good players coming along as we have now. And, if you have watched any local rugby this season, then you'll agree with me that the strength around the City is very encouraging indeed.

The future, in my humble opinion, is decidedly bright. I'm not expecting the 'Elver Eaters' to beat everything in sight next season, but I'm quite sure that the time will come when they do. And, not wishing to be snide, all our strength will be home-grown. Which means a lot.

### **County Next Season**

Isn't it good to see that County Rugby will be back at Kingsholm next season? Although I fully appreciate the difficulties which have been caused by that boring Divisional Championship (which doesn't appear to be able to produce a decent England side anyway), it has to be admitted that Kingsholm isn't the same without Gloucestershire's periodic visits, and I honestly believe that Gloucestershire isn't the same when barred from Kingsholm.

It's obviously too early to make any statements about the availability of players, but I do hope something can be worked out so that we can see Gloucestershire back where it ought to be — a fixture at the Kingsholm Final.

Perhaps if that happened, a few people in high places might be brought round to the school of thought which says you should be able to pick a strong International XV from a properly organised County Championship.

### **Thanks From Coney Hill Residents**

Councillor Archie Hartshorne, on behalf of the Committees of the Coney Hill North and Coney Hill South Residents Associations, has asked me publicly to relay their thanks to the Gloucester players who turned out on a chilly Easter Sunday morning, to play a Coney Hill Select XV. The proceeds, which turned out to be a highly creditable £171.00, are going towards providing much-needed play equipment for the children in Coney Hill.

Archie, who raised a respectable three-mile-an-hour gallop while running the line, asks me especially to thank Tim Smith who organised the side for him. Tim himself had a bad foot, or something, so didn't actually play, but I didn't notice it impeding his speed to the bar after the match.

The final score was (Surprise! Surprise!) 30 points all, and there were some decidedly interesting innovations to be seen. Like, for example, Jeremy Bennett's effort when asked to convert his own try. He decided that a drop goal from in front of the posts gave him his best chance, but a slight slice meant that the corner flag was in considerable danger for a moment or two.

Quite frankly, I lost count of the comings and goings on and off the field, although I'm almost sure I saw Nick Price, Mike Hamlin and Paul Ashmead fluttering around from time to time.

Thanks lads! It was great fun to watch, and a very worthwhile cause. The only problem is that I'm told I'm down to raise a cricket team to perform a similar service during the summer.

Anyone want a game?

### **Into 87/88**

I suppose that the best way to cap the first full-scale club programme ever produced for a United match would be to take a look at next season. Unfortunately, it needs crystal ball.

The thing which will be exercising all our minds, of course, is the advent of the Leagues. I hope all goes well, and that league rugby doesn't attract the 'yobbo' element which has started to creep in, even at Kingsholm. They can be sure that they're not wanted, and they'll get short shrift from us.

### **Tailpiece**

Reverting to that Coney Hill game, I wonder why everyone kept going 'Shush!' when I mentioned Widden Old Boys? Have a good summer.

PETER ARNOLD.

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