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GLOUCESTER RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

30p
OFFICIAL
PROGRAMME

GLOUCESTER v CHELTENHAM

Wednesday
11th November, 1987

Kick off 7 p.m.

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FUTURE TENSE

This is the night we invite the neighbours in — and very welcome too. You can say what you like about League structures and similar matters, but it would be a black day for the Game if such fixtures against local clubs became redundant — squeezed out by the increasingly competitive nature of the fixture list.

This is only a personal view, you understand, but I believe there are one or two reasons for making the statement.

First of all, it would be a bad job if we could not find room for the premier side, from a town of almost the same size as our own, only just nine miles down the road. All right — so they've fallen on hard times, but it wasn't always like that, as many of us can remember.

The second point stems directly from the first. The new Clubs Championship exposes a side's weaknesses cruelly. Once a club has suffered relegation — perhaps more than once — is there any way back if they then *only* play teams of the lower standard? Theoretically, of course, there is. But only up to a point. Ask Accrington Stanley, or Darlington.

Cheltenham haven't won all that many games lately, which certainly argues a tense future as the league structure unfolds over the next few seasons. The opportunity to experience Rugby of the standard offered by the Gloucesters and Baths of this world is about the only way they have to get back to their old eminence.

"All very well for Cheltenham" you may say, "But what's in it for Gloucester?"

The first reply to that could be that the question shouldn't be asked at all. Rugby Union is still an amateur game (just), and one player is as good as another, even if one comes from Auckland and the other from Chorlton-cum-Hardy.

If you don't like the abstract tone of that argument, then remember how many respected Gloucester players have joined us from Cheltenham, over the years, and consider whether we may owe them something for that. Alternatively, think of the absolute wealth of talent we have languishing in the United. Games like this evening's affair give them a chance to show what they can do in a First XV atmosphere, which is a bit daunting first time round. Remember, also, that the stresses and strains of one 'big' match after another *must* begin to tell on the first-choice players. No one plays Rugby Union full time, and the stars do have to be rested some time, or at least, given a gentler game or two.

Anyway — you get the idea. I do seem to have started in an unwontedly serious vein this evening, but that doesn't mean that I have forgotten to wish the Cheltenham lads a highly enjoyable evening. And to hope that our traditional series of fixtures continue for many seasons yet.

THANKS TO CHELTENHAM AND GLOUCESTER

Sponsorship of the Cheltenham game by Cheltenham and Gloucester Building Society has become quite a tradition, over the years. Familiarity certainly does not breed contempt, however; the more often they support us in this way, the more grateful we are to them.

Tonight's continuation in the saga is, I have to report, tinged with regret. Peter Bicknell, the Gloucester Manager is retiring very shortly. Peter is, of course, an ever-present at Kingsholm, but 'does good by stealth' in several other fields. He is very well known throughout the City, and will certainly be missed in his spheres of endeavour.

Typically, he has brought his successor along this evening. Len Evans comes to us from Southampton, after a spell in Southend. He does, however, have a Rugby background, and is, I'm told, glad to be back in civilised territory. Welcome Len. Hope we see as much of you as we did of Peter.

I say 'did', because he tells me that he is taking a sabbatical in North Cornwall for the next few months. More than a few, in fact, but has plans to return to the fold at about the start of next season.

Parenthetically, Cheltenham Branch also has a new Manager. He's also here tonight, his name is Andrew Stone, and has gravitated hitherwards via Hereford and 'Howard's Way' country in Lymington. Welcome again — and you don't actually have to wait for a Cheltenham game before you come again.

Peter Bicknell has certainly seen some changes in C & G in his time. The Society is now the tenth largest in Britain, with a reputation for service and innovation.

Things are interesting locally, too. The new headquarters building at Barnwood Fields is proceeding on schedule, and should, I'm told, be opening its doors at just about the start of the 1989 season. It might also surprise you to know that the magnificent Gloucester branch on the ground floor of the old Guildhall in Eastgate Street is now just about a year old. *Tempus fugit!*

Again, our thanks to our friendly, neighbourhood Building Society. Hope everyone has a fine time this evening.

LIGHT FANTASTIC

On Saturday evening, after the Newbridge match, the players launch their series of Players' Discos in the complex. Only £1.50, and any player will be glad to sell you a ticket. They're enjoyable occasions, by anyone's standards, and the sight of Jeremy Bennett break dancing is worth the entrance money without going any further.

It that's your scene, then don't miss it. If it isn't — you have been warned!

NEWBRIDGE ON SATURDAY

The Eagles have landed — with a bump. And if you want to know what is so good about Welsh Rugby these days, perhaps you could get a glimmer by coming along on Saturday, when we look forward to a visit from Newbridge. After all, every one of our home Welsh fixtures has been worth seeing, so far this season.

On the following Saturday — November, 21st — don't forget that we visit Twickenham for the rearranged Harlequins game in the Clubs Championship. (Incidentally, it's nice to see that Cheltenham won one of those, against Salisbury, last Saturday).

Back at the ranch, on that day, we have the County match against Cornwall, and following the cracking game at Bristol versus Somerset, that could be worth watching too. It would be nice to see the 'Old Firm' of Gadd, Teague and Longstaff in harness together at Kingsholm again.

Then, on November 28th, we round off the month by continuing the Celtic theme with a visit from London Irish. So perhaps November isn't such a bleak month after all.

CHRISTMAS TIME IS DRAW TIME

John Beaman announced, with justifiable euphoria, that the Grand Christmas Draw is now in operation. This has become quite a tradition, over the past season or three, and ends with a happy thrash in the Clubhouse when the actual draw is made.

As always, there are simply gallons of prizes to be won — and that's only the liquid ones.

Well worth fluttering a bob or two, wouldn't you say?

Not, I hope, that it will prevent you continuing to invest in our major Lottery — and don't forget that there's always room for a few more Agents, if you're interested in earning a little money for any club or organisation in which you have an interest.

ILLUSTRIOUS GLOUCESTERS

As you probably know, we had almost 50 sailors from HMS 'Gloucester' along to the Rosslyn Park match last Saturday. They had a great time, which continued around the fleshpots of Gloucester well after most of us had gone home to the telly. Yet there wasn't a bleary eye to be seen in their very impressive parade and guard during the Remembrance Day ceremonies.

Talking to the lads while they were here, however, I was informed that they are now fielding a very useful Fifteen of their own. They are very proud of the fact that, very recently, they beat HMS 'Illustrious', by 8 points to 0. That's not bad, when you consider that 'Illustrious' has a complement of 1200 men to 'our' lad's 267.

One subject came up, however. They would love to follow Naval tradition and play in the same colours as the City whose name they bear. The team from HMS 'Nottingham' do apparently.

Now we wouldn't want to be upstaged by Nottingham, would we? Is there any enterprising business out there who would like to sponsor a set of shirts for HMS 'Gloucester'? Around £500 should do it, I would think, and there would be some useful PR in it. I'd see to that.

TAILPIECE

I'll leave the last word to Peter Bicknell, this evening. I quote:

"With the Guildhall now being Cheltenham and Gloucester's 'flagship' branch, and HQ moving to Gloucester, shouldn't they change their name to the 'Gloucester and Cheltenham' Building Society?"

Of course, Peter's retiring, so he's fireproof, isn't he?

PETER ARNOLD



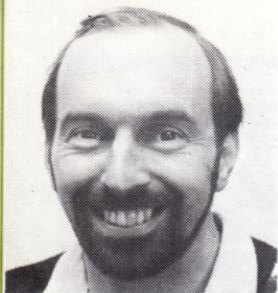
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TALKING RUGBY with Terry Phillips

The Citizen rugby writer Terry Phillips on the news from Kingsholm - in every Gloucester RFC programme.

Cheltenham, tonight's visitors to Kingsholm, gave their season a major boost at the weekend with their first win against club opposition this season.

They won 16-12 in a Courage Championship Area League South encounter with Salisbury at the Prince of Wales Stadium, although two players — one from each side — was sent off.

Steve Pagett was the Cheltenham player to be dismissed, but that could not detract from a morale boosting victory.

It ended a run of 11 successive defeats and gave Cheltenham new hope, although a trip to face Gloucester at Kingsholm is a daunting prospect to follow your first victory.

Gloucester have now won four of their last five matches and have one more — Newbridge at home this Saturday — before the vital trip to play Harlequins at Kingsholm on Saturday, November 21st.

That is the day Gloucestershire continue their County Championship campaign with a match against Cornwall at Kingsholm (2.30 p.m.).

There are currently four Gloucester players in the County team and after that sparkling 42-22 victory against Somerset in Bristol, officials are hoping for a big attendance at Kingsholm.

The Cherry and White players currently in the Gloucestershire team are Gordon Sargent, who is captain, Glyn Mann, Mike Longstaff and Mike Teague, who is due for a return to the club soon after missing the start of the season.

They are all in the team to play against Devon at Exeter this Saturday and then comes the vital Cornwall match a week later.

It is a shame nothing could be sorted out to allow Gloucester first team players to make themselves available for the County, but with Divisional Championship games due to start soon and the National League in full swing there are a lot of other commitments.

Orrell, Gloucester's opponents in the John Player Cup third round, earned their first Courage Clubs Championship National League Division One victory when they defeated Sale 19-0 at home over the weekend.

Sale are still without a win after five matches, while Orrell have won one, lost one and drawn one.

Courage Clubs Championships:

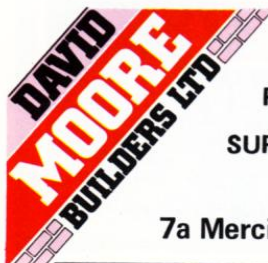
National Division One	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Nottingham	8	4	1	3	116	97	19	21
Moseley	5	3	0	2	85	63	22	14
Gloucester	4	3	0	1	83	44	39	13
Bristol	5	2	1	2	90	54	36	12
Leicester	3	3	0	0	68	38	30	12
Bath	4	2	0	2	57	58	-1	10
Waterloo	2	2	0	0	26	15	11	8
Coventry	5	1	0	4	61	136	-75	8
Orrell	3	1	1	1	41	40	1	7
Sale	5	0	0	5	37	116	-79	5
Wasps	1	0	1	0	12	12	0	2
Harlequins	1	0	0	1	9	12	-3	1



Down you go. Full-back Tim Smith tackles Rosslyn Park's former England international Andy Ripley during Gloucester's 16-6 win at Kingsholm last Saturday.



Scrum-half Marcus Hannaford is possession against Rosslyn Park.



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