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GLOUCESTER RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

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OFFICIAL PROGRAMME

GLOUCESTER v LONDON IRISH

Saturday
28th November, 1987



Kick off 3 p.m.

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NEVER SERIOUS

There is an old saying to the effect that in England, the situation is always serious, but never desperate, while in Ireland it's always desperate but never serious. The original coiner of the phrase was probably not a rugby man, but he might well have been.

We rarely seem to be able to produce a good England side, but always live in hopes that, in spite of ourselves, we just might. Ireland seem to be able to conjure up good sides from the ashes of the previous season, but although they're keen enough to win, never go into a state of the vapours if they don't.

We had a good example of the sort of thing I mean a few seasons ago.

That particular year, Gloucester were going well. London Irish were about the last first-class side with an undefeated record for the season. Everyone was looking forward to the game at Kingsholm, but the perverse fates decreed that the match couldn't be played — was it because of the weather? I forget.

Anyway, the game was rearranged, most unusually, for a Sunday. It was a fine match, but in the end, Gloucester came out fairly comfortable winners.

"Ah well!" said one vast lock forward, afterwards, "If we had to lose our record, we'd as soon it was you boys as anyone!" They all then retired to the Irish Club, where, according to Jim Coughlin, Guinness, Jameson's and song flowed until dawn's early light.

Mind you, since then, they have had some practice at losing to Gloucester. The last time they visited us, we had the melancholy duty of sending them home nursing a 44-3 defeat. Last season, Gloucester won in London, 24-6. In fact, the Exiles last won this fixture, at home, in 1984 by 19 points to 16.

But you never know with the Irish. They can quite easily brew up some Celtic magic and astound everyone — and, I suppose, next Monday's controversy-ridden Bath game makes it likely that Gloucester will be resting a few people today.

Not that it matters. London Irish are always great value, we're always glad to see them here, and we're always delighted to offer them an exceptionally warm welcome.

Hope you enjoy your visit, Irish. We mightn't be as green as Erin, but we're greener than the Big Smoke. Except on the field, of course.

THANKS TO EGGLETON'S

Everyone needs a Solicitor sometime, if only to make a will, or look after a house transaction. That being so, it's my pleasure to bring to your attention, Eggleton's Solicitors of Brunswick Square. After all, any legal practice which sponsors a Kingsholm game must have their priorities right.

Not only are Eggleton's a fast-expanding and highly efficient practice, but they have a strong sporting bias too. Everyone knows Colin Dunford, and recently-appointed Partner, Geoff Gorman, plays cricket for Churchdown.

Roger Eggleton, himself, has been known to pull a pair of boots on. When he was just a little younger than he is now, he played about a dozen times, here on Kingsholm, for the Gloucester and the County Colts sides.

Roger is also the City Under Sheriff, and (I will say this only vonce) is Gloucester's *Agent Consulair* — French Consul to you. In fact, the amiable Roger is positively proud of the fact that he must be one of the few such people who can't speak French.

There, he does himself an injustice, Phrases like 'Beaujolais Nouveau' and '-Armagnac' are not unfamiliar to him.

Mustn't be too flippant, however. The fact remains that Eggleton's are a very fine Law Practice indeed, more than able to handle anything which you may wish them to do for you.

However, I think they would prefer you not to bend their ears about such things today. They have a convivial group of friends and Clients along, and we all hope that they have a thoroughly enjoyable time with us, divorced for a while from the stresses of the legal profession.

Thanks chaps. Let's do it again, some time.

... AND THANKS, WHOEVER YOU ARE

The thanks of Peter Gould and myself are due to the public-spirited gentleman who gave us a couple of Moseley programmes, but then dashed off without giving us his name. If he likes to make himself known to me, I'll be glad to buy him a pint.

You may remember, that Peter and I felt just a little miffed at the Blessed Nigel Starmer Smith's remark that the Moseley programme is the best in the country. Now, having been able to make a direct comparison, we can say, quite categorically, that it isn't. To start with, in spite of the fact that it doesn't have nearly as much colour as ours, it costs 45p to our 30p.

We are now considering what we should do about this. I'll keep you posted, if anything happens.

All good, clean fun, isn't it?

BATH ON MONDAY

So, at last, the Pundits have pronounced, and we know that Bath will be arriving 24 hours before we originally intended that they should. It seems to me that this is just one more example of the way that the Divisional Championship seems to get in the way of just about everything. Remember last season's 'de-meritisation' problems?

However, the die is now cast, and what with one thing and another, it should be a very interesting occasion. One thing's for sure - you won't want to miss it, will you?

GROUND TICKETS

We're trying an experiment at the Bath game. Following problems with the big crowd all trying to get on to the Ground at once a few minutes before kick-off at the Pontypool match, we've been thinking of ways to alleviate the crush, and shorten turnstile queues on Monday.

First and foremost, you would do everyone a favour by getting in early. When Pontypool arrived, the line-up at the turnstiles was such that quite a few people missed the kick-off, and the pavement outside was obstructed way down Worcester Street. If some of those supporters had arrived at the gates just 10 minutes earlier, a great deal of trouble could have been avoided. I know it can be difficult on the evening of a working day, but please give it a try.

Second, we're trying an experiment. Ground tickets for the Bath game will be one sale, over at the old changing rooms - under the clock - before and after the game this afternoon. I can't remember another occasion when this service has been provided for a straightforward Club match, but it's worth giving the idea a go. And it could ease things for you on Monday.

GOOD NEIGHBOURS

One more thing about Monday. If you're coming by car, please watch where you're parking it. We have had complaints about vehicles being parked all over Kingsholm, with a fine disregard for people trying to get their vehicles in and out of their own property, and you probably know how annoying that can be, from your own experience.

Our neighbours do have a lot to put up with from us during the season, and generally speaking, they do so with considerable good humour. We'd like to keep things that way.

At the moment, the Police are being very understanding about the matter, but if they find that the whole place is consistently bunged up with supporters' cars, then the time will come when they'll have to do something about it, like it or not.

If it's not too much like heresy, might I suggest you do what I do, and come by bus? Shock! Horror!

DIVISIONAL TICKETS

Stand tickets for the South and South West Divisional match against the North, on December 12th, are on sale tonight. Visit the Secretary's Office, under the main Stand, and Terry Tandy will be happy to sell you Centre Stand tickets for £3.50, or unnumbered Wing Stand ones for £3.00.

TAILPIECE

Andy Mitchell tells me about an odd experience Brian Howells had at the Harlequins game.

Brian was the Committee Man of the player's coach to Twickenham, that day, and after something of a problem finding anyone to talk to, he was eventually able to announce himself as such.

"Oh!" came the reply. "Is a senior Committee Member coming?"

It quite made Brian's day.

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.

The decision to switch the Courage Clubs Championship match against South West rivals Bath back 24 hours from next Tuesday to Monday proved a problem for selectors at Kingsholm and centre Ruari Maclean.

The selectors met on Monday evening with the idea of selecting their teams for today's match against London Irish and the Bath clash in national League Division One.

But confusion over when the Bath match was to be played meant the selectors could do nothing until Thursday evening. For Bath wanted the game postponed because it is too near the start of the Divisional Championships, while Gloucester were keen for the fixture to go ahead as planned.

The selectors met again on Thursday evening, but that still left Ruari Maclean with a problem.

The Pates Grammar School teacher is in the Anglo-Scots XV for the district championships in Scotland. He is playing against the South of Scotland in Dundee today and on Monday he is likely to be included for the second match of the championship against North and Midlands.

"I was hoping to play for the Anglo-Scots in both matches, fly immediately South and make myself available for Gloucester against Bath," says Maclean.

"Obviously I would have spoken to the selection committee about what they thought, but now the Bath game is on the Monday I am not sure what to do.

"I am desperately keen to play for Gloucester against Bath if needed, but I do not really want to miss out on matches for the Anglo-Scots."

Gloucester's problem in the centre — Paul Taylor is still some way from fitness — is partly solved now that Richard Mogg is fit again. He has been troubled by a shoulder injury, but told team secretary Mike Nicholls earlier this week he is fit and ready to play.

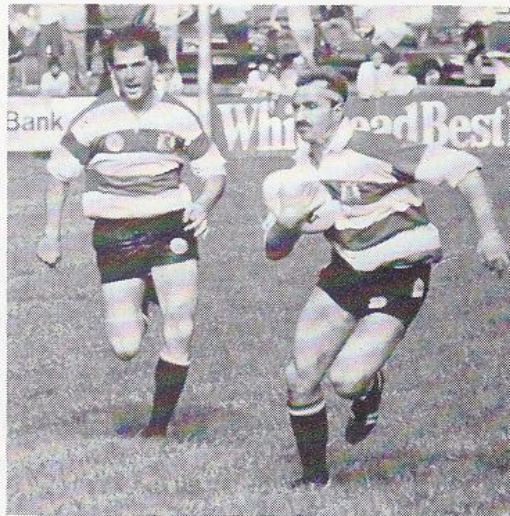
Mogg asked to play on the wing at the start of this season, but injuries to centres — Ruari

Maclean was ruled out for some time with a neck injury — plus an abundance of wingers — Jim Breeze, Nick Price, Derrick Morgan and Chris Dee are already pressing for the wing positions in the first XV — have meant he has been unable to make the switch.

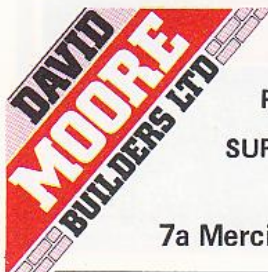
And Mogg has so far managed only five matches because of niggling injuries. He has missed the last four with his shoulder injury, but ended the frustration of having to sit it out when he reported fit this week.

Courage Clubs Championships:

National Division One	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Nottingham	9	4	1	4	129	119	22
Leicester	5	5	0	0	102	60	20
Bristol	6	3	1	2	115	67	16
Gloucester	5	3	1	1	92	53	15
Moseley	5	3	0	2	85	63	14
Bath	6	2	1	3	81	86	13
Coventry	6	1	1	4	70	145	10
Waterloo	2	2	0	0	26	15	8
Orrell	4	1	1	2	54	65	8
Wasps	3	1	1	1	40	39	7
Sale	5	0	0	5	37	116	5
Harlequins	2	0	1	1	18	21	3



Paul Taylor (left) and Richard Mogg. Taylor is still out injured, while Mogg has reported fit.



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