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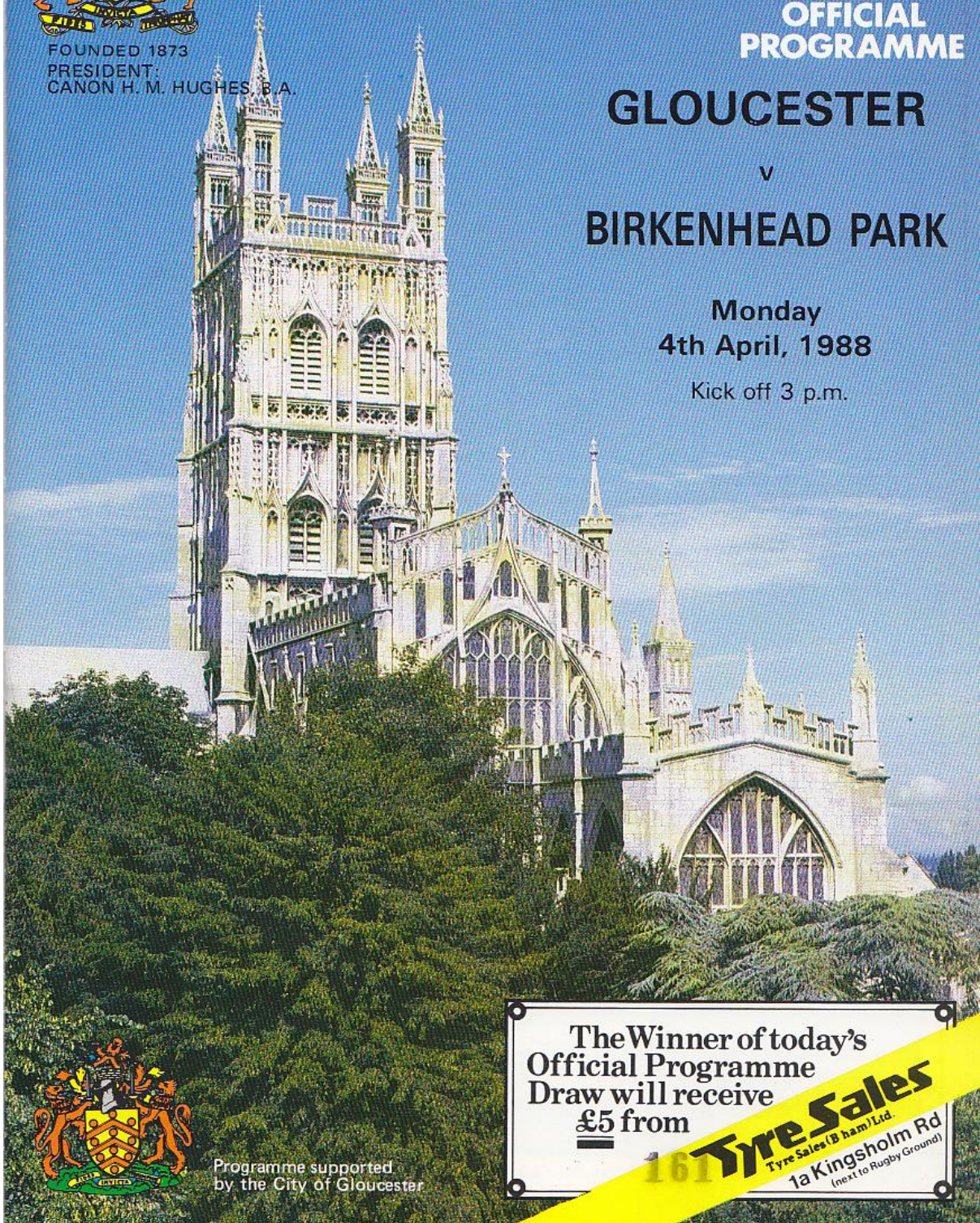
# GLOUCESTER RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

**30p**  
OFFICIAL  
PROGRAMME

## GLOUCESTER v BIRKENHEAD PARK

Monday  
4th April, 1988

Kick off 3 p.m.



Programme supported  
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The Winner of today's  
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### TRADITIONAL EASTER

Had a good Easter have you? Scoffed your hot cross buns? Nibbled your Easter egg? Toyed — in the nicest possible way — with an Easter Bunny?

Good, but even if you've done all that, there's still one Easter tradition to enjoy — the visit of Birkenhead Park to Kingsholm.

They don't come every year, of course, but they are certainly one of the two or three clubs on whom we can always rely to provide our Easter holiday entertainment. For which we are all very grateful.

It would be inhospitable, even indelicate, to harp on about the results between our two clubs over the past several years, but there's more to rugby than scorelines. As one New Zealand journalist wrote: "You never beat Wales — you just score more points than they do."

I can see the point he's making. As long as everyone, emphatically including the players on both sides, have themselves a thoroughly good time, on and off the field, then it's been a successful game. By that criterion, Gloucester v. Birkenhead Park has always been highly successful.

Of course, the way things happen in this infuriating game, my pontificating on in that style probably means that 'Park' will put it across us today, and I for one, wouldn't shed many tears if they did. They're a fine old club, full of enthusiasm, and can always be relied upon to play an entertaining brand of North Country rugby.

What more could we ask on Easter Monday?

Welcome lads. Come again another year.

### THANKS TO EVERYONE

As regular purchasers of the programme will know, this is the spot where I usually say a word of thanks to the sponsor of that particular game, and then go on to tell everyone something about the field of endeavour in which our generous benefactor is engaged.

Today is different. This is the occasion when we invite all our sponsors, and those other open-handed people who supply advertising boards around the Ground. It is therefore also the time for me to reiterate our thanks, and tell you something about the sponsorship scene generally.

First and foremost, the additional resources made available to the Club by this method are very welcome indeed — you only have to think about the horrendous expense of the alterations forced upon the ground for this season to understand that. Second, it is only right that the City's premier sporting organisation should have strong links with the working community. We don't exist in a vacuum, and with Gloucester entering its most exciting period of development for decades, it's proper for us to play a part.

I very much doubt if any Rugby Club has such a diverse and comprehensive sponsorship list. Think of it. We have engineering organisations, agricultural people, financial institutions, small local companies, large national operations, multi-national conglomerates. We are probably unique in enjoying the patronage of the City Council itself. If anyone wanted to do a survey based on a cross section of Gloucester life, they could do far worse than mail Gloucester RFC's list of sponsors.

In some ways we have been the victims of our own success. There is a finite number of First XV games, and we are now at the point where all of them are taken up rapidly. United games are also available for sponsorship, and that is a field which has been growing satisfactorily over the past couple of seasons.

However, laurels are for winning rather than resting on, and we aren't being complacent about anything. Match ball sponsorship is under weigh, and other ways in which interested bodies and individuals can express their support are being investigated. We are also looking into ways to improve the facilities which we offer to sponsors.

Obviously, we are eternally grateful to everyone who supports us in this manner, and I would like to emphasise that, but there's also another group of people who deserve a word of appreciation.

Attracting and organising sponsorship doesn't just happen. Neither is it something which only goes on match days. It's a time-consuming exercise which needs considerable energy and expertise.

Our thanks, therefore, are due to Peter Gould and the select band of people who help him in this endeavour, not least the ladies who serve behind the Sponsors Bar.

Thanks, Pete. Even if you are a naturalised Geordie.

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## LOTTERY

While we're on the subject of fund raising, it's nice to be able to report that our major lottery is providing useful resources too. So much so, in fact, that it would seem to be worth while to continue to run it during the close season.

That means that we could do with some more Agents. Just to remind you, anyone who sells lottery tickets is entitled to a percentage of the takings, which can be useful for anyone involved in, let's say a local charity.

If you're interested, please contact Terry Tandy, who will be delighted to arrange delivery of supplies of tickets during the summer months.

## CONQUERING COLTS

At the time of writing, Gloucester Colts have won eight out of their eight games, and that includes victories over such clubs as Bath and Moseley. I note that another game is imminent, but assuming they win that, then there's a very good chance of going through the season undefeated.

This is quite an achievement, and one which has excellent implications for the future. You don't need me to tell you how many eminent Gloucester players have started their cherry-and-white careers by this method. Mike Teague, Mike Hamlin. . . .

Reg Collins and his people have cause for satisfaction. So have all the rest of us.

## DISTINGUISHED VISITOR

Next Saturday, as ever was, we have a visit from Welsh Cup finalists, Neath. Should be a super occasion, and I can now announce that it's one which will be enlivened by the attendance of Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant for the County of Gloucestershire, Colonel M.St.J.V. Gibbs C.B., DSO, TD — at his own request.

It appears that it's many years since Colonel Gibbs visited Kingsholm, and asked our Sheriff, and Club Patron, Councillor Archie Hartshorne to arrange one. As ever, Archie was happy to oblige.

## SPRING SALE

Following that, on April 16th, we have our last Courage Clubs Championship game of the season, when Sale are the opposition. The last time I looked, Sale had yet to win a game and look certain to be relegated, but we've come unstuck at their hands before. Gloucester's chances of winning the competition are now really only mathematical, but we'd have no chance at all if we lost that one.

That will about wrap Gloucester's Kingsholm season up, although we have an attractive trip to Stradey to play Llanelli — the other Welsh Cup finalists — on the 23rd.

Never mind. There's always another season.

## UNDER 21

Have you noticed how well the Gloucestershire Under 21 side is doing? This new competition is still only just getting off the ground, but after disposing of the undefeated, and much-fancied Devon side, and fairly liquidising Buckinghamshire, the lads are now happily anticipating a semi-final spot.

You can't keep a good County down, at any level.

## TAILPIECE

You'll find an ad in the programme entitled 'The Other Rugby Union'. It refers, of course, to the hostelry called the Union, in Westgate Street. You may not have caught up with the fact that the pub's Sunday evening quiz team has won the Gloucester section of the Whitbread League, although they subsequently went down by one point to the Soudley Arms in Cheltenham. That wasn't too bad, however. The Soudley reached the Grand Final last year, and only lost on a tie-break.

So what's all that got to do with rugby? Simply the team members. They are: the Captain, ex-United and Gloucester Old Boys player, Stan Pritchett, Jonathan Meadows, from a family not unfamiliar at Kingsholm, Paul Wood, who everyone will remember playing on the flank for Gloucester and Gloucestershire, and another chap whose name escapes me for the moment.

Who says rugby people are thickoes?

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.

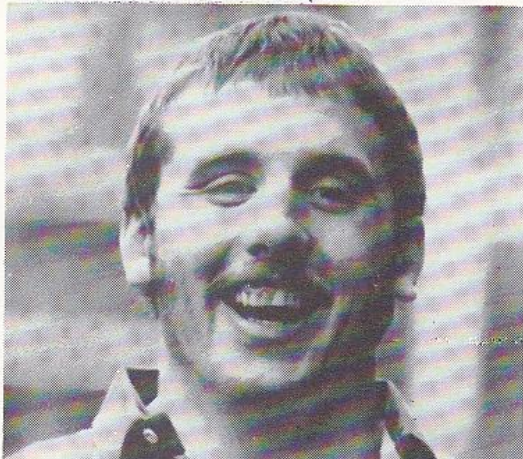
Gloucester have two attractive home matches left this season — against Welsh Cup finalists Neath next Saturday and Sale in the Courage Clubs Championship a week later.

The clash with Neath has the makings of a cracking encounter with Gloucester tuning up for their Championship match and Neath preparing for the final against Llanelli and their former fly-half Jonathan Davies.

Neath were in superb form during the Welsh Cup semi-final triumph against Pontypool, coming from 9-0 down at half-time to win 20-9 and end Pontypool's run of 29 successive wins.

And their visit next Saturday should attract one of the biggest crowds this season to Kingsholm.

Their line-up features players like Welsh full-back Paul Thorburn, aged 25, and 26-year-old hooker Kevin Phillips, who featured in three World Cup matches for Wales last year.



Kevin Phillips . . . Neath's hooker who made his Wales debut against France in Paris last season.

Sale have not achieved the heights Neath have reached this season, but their visit to Kingsholm on April 16 will be hard fought.

For Gloucester, having won five of their nine matches so far, are intent on finishing as high as possible even though they are now out of the title chase.

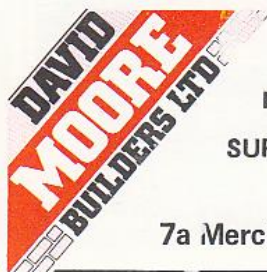
And Sale still hold hopes of avoiding the drop. It looks a forlorn hope and only a victory against Gloucester can keep their chances alive, but they cling to the dream.



Paul Thorburn . . . Neath full-back who first played for Wales against France in 1985.

### COURAGE CLUBS CHAMPIONSHIP:

	National Division One						Pts
	P	W	D	L	F	A	
Leicester	9	8	0	1	186	118	33
Gloucester	9	5	1	3	145	114	25
Wasps	8	5	1	2	124	102	24
Nottingham	10	4	1	5	138	136	23
Bath	9	4	1	4	130	130	22
Moseley	10	4	0	6	140	167	22
Bristol	8	4	1	3	146	92	21
Orrell	8	3	1	4	123	113	18
Waterloo	6	4	0	2	86	90	18
Harlequins	7	3	1	3	124	77	17
Coventry	8	2	1	5	97	170	15
Sale	8	0	0	8	71	201	8



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