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GLOUCESTER RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

30^p

OFFICIAL PROGRAMME

GLOUCESTER

v

NEATH

Saturday
9th April, 1988

Kick off 3 p.m.

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SAVING THE BEST 'TIL LAST

It won't be a startling revelation if I state that there are two distinct and separate wings to the Welsh Rugby Football Union. There is the Cardiff-Newport-Bridgend sort of axis, and there is also the Llanelli-Neath-Swansea element. It's our good fortune that we try conclusions with the latter happy band at the two extremes of the season.

Gloucester's 1987/8 campaign started on a high note, as you'll probably remember. We beat Swansea at St. Helen's by 19 points to 6. Much beer has flowed over the dentures since, and now we find ourselves confronted by Neath and Llanelli in rapid succession. Some indication of the magnitude of the assignment is given by the fact that the two sides concerned are the Welsh Cup Finalists this season, and no doubt the Pundits of the Principality will be comparing the results in their efforts to frustrate the bookmakers.

But what can one say about Neath? They are undoubtedly one of the best sides in the Home Countries, at the moment, and have achieved that eminence by playing a brand of rugby which is both efficient and attractive. They bristle with good players, and from an observers point of view, appear to have benefited, if anything, from the departure of Jonathan Davies.

And there's always Paul Thorburn. If Britain had been party to the Reagan — Gorbachev Intermediate Range Missile Treaty, he'd probably have been dismantled by now.

I assume that today's fixture means that we shall be visiting The Gnoll next season. If so, I heartily recommend anyone to go along and support Gloucester on that occasion. You'll find an excellent ground, with fine facilities, and, most important, a genuine and warm welcome from the Neath faithful.

That being so, the least we can do is reciprocate today. We hope our distinguished visitors have a memorable visit, find us a useful warm-up for the Cup, and generally have a great time at Kingsholm.

THANKS TO THE CITY

We must be unique among English Rugby Clubs to have the support of our Local Authority, by way of Sponsorship, on two occasions during the season. And you'll have noted that their contribution to the programme has added a new dimension to it, throughout the year.

Earlier on, the City Council's job creators sponsored a game. Today, it's the turn of the Tourism people. When I asked ex-Harlequin, Phil Cooke, whose bag this is, what I should say in these notes, his reply was immediate: "Everyone's heard about Gloucester's tourism potential. Now tell 'em what it means to *them*." So here goes.

First of all, money. Independent estimates reckon that we can expect about £15 million, in tourist money, to be spent in Gloucester this coming summer. That must be good for all of us, because it eventually filters back into wage packets and trade generally. And the experts also estimate that the potential is at least three times that figure — every year. And that ain't peanuts.

Similarly, have you noticed how many local pubs have been, or are being, refurbished, and how many new eating places have opened up in the City? This means better facilities for everyone, of course, and it wouldn't have happened without the increased tourist potential. And that's before the tourist-related facilities in the Docks have even put in an appearance.

Apart from the Waterways Museum, of course. They're expecting at least 200,000 visitors a year, which again, means more revenue for the City.

One more thing. You mustn't run away with the idea that our highly attractive Tourist Information Centre, in St. Michael's Tower, on the Cross, is solely for the benefit of visitors. The facilities are also for the use of Gloucester residents, and you'll find that Ros Faers and her team are very willing to help if you have any queries. It's our Centre — why not use it?

Phil Cooke comments; "Until recently, the problem has been to convince people that Gloucester is a major tourist centre. Now we're past that state — the travel trade, home and overseas, knows it is." If influential articles, appearing in American travel journals, over the winter, are any parameter, he's absolutely right. It's nice to see pictures of the Cathedral and good old Gloucester Docks appearing in a New York-based publication.

More power to your elbow, Phil. And we hope that today's effort helps you in *your* efforts, as well as providing a little relaxation.

I'll leave the last word to him. "The two things we have which are famous worldwide are Beatrix Potter and the Gloucester Rugby Club!"

Well, he would know. And it's nice of him to say so.

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DAVID I. ROBINS M.Inst.T.T.

HANDS IN POCKETS

Another regular landmark comes along today. It's the day that our friends from the St. John's Ambulance Service make their annual collection.

'Nuff said, really. You'll be thoroughly aware of the sterling work they do at Kingsholm, season after season. Generations of slightly buckled players have reason to be grateful for their ministrations.

So let's make it a bumper collection, this season. They deserve every penny we can afford.

And, incidentally, St. John's are always looking for new members. Interested? Alan Hawker, of 16, Munsley Grove, Matson (Telephone: 22595) would be glad to hear from you. Who knows — it could get you into the ground for free!

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

I wouldn't be doing my job if I didn't bid a special welcome to three distinguished visitors, here today — one of them and ever-present, and the other two far less familiar to us.

First of all, we are honoured by the presence of Col. Gibbs, Gloucestershire's Lord Lieutenant. He's been here before, but not for a very long time, and not in his official capacity. Welcome, Sir. Come again soon.

Our second honoured guest is Sir Anthony Kershaw, who until retiring at the last General Election was a distinguished Parliamentarian, representing Stroud for many years. Anyone who has reached the same geriatric stage as I have will remember that he once stood for Gloucester. So it's nice to have him back.

Our third visitor is Councillor Archie Hartshorne. He's always here, of course, as a Patron, but today attends in his official capacity as Sheriff of Gloucester. I'm told that it was his casual remark at a Civic event which eventually resulted in the Lord Lieutenant paying us a visit today.

It's nice to have a little tone added to the whole proceedings.

WELL DONE MOGGY!

Anyone who saw 'Rugby Special' last Sunday will have seen the couple of blistering breaks made for the Barbarians against Cardiff by Richard Mogg. They'll probably have grinned to themselves and said "That's our Moggy!"

He followed it up by scoring a try against Swansea, and I don't need to have seen it to be able to picture exactly how he did it.

It was a very pleasant thing for Richard Mogg to have gained a Barbarian place. His performance just about set the seal on it.

Well done, Richard. You did us proud.

AGENTS

I don't seem to have won anything in our lottery, this year, but that's about par for the course for me. However, my chances have been extended.

It has been decided to continue running the lottery through the summer months, which means that we could do with a few more Agents. Terry Tandy will give you the gen, and arrange delivery of supplies of tickets.

SALE NEXT WEEK

Last home First XV game of the season, next Saturday. And it's an important one. We have Sale, in the last of the Courage Clubs Championship matches.

Sale don't seem to have won one this season, but have had some good results in other respects. They'll certainly be out to break their duck. Why not come along and see if they manage it?

TAILPIECE

Did you hear that Malcolm Preedy got injured at the Moseley game? Apparently, he got hit in the eye by the referee.

Any further comment from me would be superfluous.

PETER ARNOLD



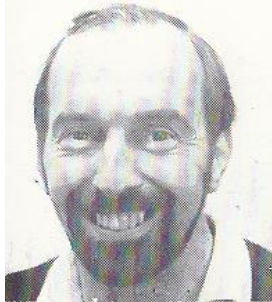
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TALKING RUGBY with Terry Phillips

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

Leicester are champions of the first Courage Championship National Division One, while Gloucester still hold hopes of finishing second.

Wasps lie in runners-up spot, but Gloucester have a home match against bottom club Sale and a possible clash with Leicester away on the last day of the season.

As Leicester have already clinched the title it looks likely that re-arranged match will not be played, but secretary Terry Tandy was still waiting for news yesterday.

If the Leicester game is not played then Gloucester would be left with the match against Sale to give themselves a chance of pipping Wasps for second place.

At first glance the Sale match looks a comfortable proposition, but Sale are desperate for points in their fight against relegation.

Rosslyn Park look likely champions of National Division Two, which would put them in Division One next season.

They have completed their matches and have a total of 37 points from eight wins, two draws and a defeat.

	National Division Two						
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rosslyn Park	11	8	2	1	155	83	37
L'pool/St. Helens	9	7	1	1	119	61	31
Richmond	10	6	0	4	137	134	28
Headingley	10	5	2	3	164	101	27
Bedford	10	5	2	3	119	114	27
Saracens	9	5	2	2	172	83	26
London Irish	11	4	1	6	120	177	24
London Scottish	8	4	0	4	114	90	20
Blackheath	11	2	0	9	102	187	17
Gosforth	9	2	1	6	87	115	16
London Welsh	9	2	1	6	115	149	16
Northampton	9	1	0	8	78	188	12

N.B.: The change to the Bedford and Gosforth statistics is due to Gosforth having three Championship points (and so a win) deducted according to rule 7bii. Match points for and against have been deducted from both sides.

It's been cup time in the North Gloucester Combination for the last two weeks and the semi-finals are scheduled for next week.

In the Senior Cup Matson look set to retain their trophy and they face Tredworth on Monday's semi-final. The other Senior Cup tie features Spartans against Gordon League — a repeat of the Flowers County Cup match earlier this season when League won 7-6.

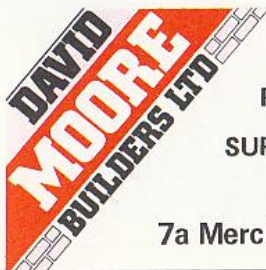
Our pictures show some of the action from Cup matches.



Tredworth scrum-half Harry Gwilliam in possession during their quarter-final win against Gloucester Civil Service in the North Gloucester Combination Senior Cup.

COURAGE CLUBS CHAMPIONSHIP:

	National Division One						
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Leicester	10	9	0	1	225	133	37
Wasps	9	6	1	2	146	115	28
Gloucester	9	5	1	3	145	114	25
Nottingham	11	4	1	6	146	170	24
Bath	9	4	1	4	130	130	22
Moseley	10	4	0	6	140	167	22
Harlequins	8	4	1	3	158	85	21
Bristol	8	4	1	3	146	92	21
Waterloo	8	4	0	4	114	151	20
Orrell	8	3	1	4	123	113	18
Coventry	8	2	1	5	97	170	15
Sale	8	0	0	8	71	120	8



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