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GLOUCESTER RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

30p

OFFICIAL PROGRAMME

GLOUCESTER v SWANSEA

Saturday
3rd September, 1988

Kick off 3 p.m.

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WELCOME HOME!

I was going to start by asking you if you'd had a good summer, but as the weather has simply been a continuation of that we expect during the rugby season, the enquiry is a bit superfluous. I suppose we'll play our first month's fixtures in brilliant sunshine . . .

Still — it's great to be back in our accustomed places after the four-month break, and it's quite typical of the eccentricities of the Kingsholm scene that we must be the only club in England to start the season with our 'Swan Song'.

It's only in comparatively recent years that we have met the formidable Swansea side so early in the season, and the wisdom of that policy has only become fully apparent this year. By taking them on right at the beginning, the new League structure, only now properly established, doesn't interfere. So one of the leading Anglo-Welsh fixtures in the calendar would seem to be safe. And that can't be bad.

It's quite a challenge, obviously. Last season Gloucester caused a flutter in the journalistic dovescotes by beating Swansea by a very creditable 19 points to 6, and at St. Helens at that. It's only fair to state, however, that we haven't come out on the winning side that often — but then, not many sides do when meeting Swansea, be it in September or April.

Swansea won't have forgotten last year's result either. Which should make for a fairly interesting encounter. But whatever happens, it's very good to be able to welcome the 'Whites' to Kingsholm once again. We couldn't wish for better company in which to start the 1988/89 campaign.

THANKS TO AVONPRINT

If Swansea are old and respected visitors to Kingsholm, so are Avonprint, today's generous Sponsors. In fact, the Cirencester-based print firm make something of a habit of supporting the Swansea game, and usually perform the same service for the visit of Pontypridd in the in-between season.

To call Avonprint a 'print firm' is a bit like saying that Gareth Edwards was a bit of a scrum half. The facts are that they now have a turnover nudging £5 million, have a 3,500 square-foot factory under construction in Swindon — moving in next Spring — and are to install two new five-colour presses in November at an investment of over £1 million.

The firm employs 125 people now, and have plans for more. Their sister firm, Adsetters, has established itself as one of the leading typesetters in the South West. The new Swindon factory will specialise in short-run and instant print work. Add that lot to the high-quality general printing which the firm has achieved a high reputation for, and you have a potent force in the print world, one which can handle just about anything you're likely to throw at it.

We like to think that their involvement here has helped a little, by making their name better known, and showing that they're considerably more than a soulless business concern. If you need their services you could mention the fact to Gordon Clifford or one of his colleagues in the bar afterwards. Or ring them on 0285 67811.

But even if you don't, we're sure you'll join us in thanking them for their generosity, and wishing them an extremely happy occasion.

JUST THE TICKET!

This being the first programme of the season, you'd expect me to make a plug for Membership. It makes a great deal of sense, actually, and you only have to attend about a dozen games to be in pocket on the deal. David Foyle will be glad to give you full details, or you could enquire from any Committee Member, or at the Office behind the main stand.

And, while I'm on the subject, don't forget that Member or not, you need a Social Club membership card to be able to use the Clubhouse. That's the Law, and that's all there is to it. John Beaman will, no doubt, be doing the necessary, so see him.

INTERNATIONALS

The due date for applications for International tickets seems to get earlier every year. In fact, it's even worse this season, because the first International game is against Australia on November 5th (Fireworks Day!) and Terry Tandy has had to make an inspired guess about how many tickets the Club will want, even before the season starts.

If you're interested, better get your skates on and acquire an application form from the Office.

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BIT OF A FLUTTER

Our lottery, launched last year, has, to use Terry Tandy's phrase, been "tootling along nicely." However, you'll have read about the financial situation, forced upon the Club by the major renovations called for by the post-Bradford 'Safety at Sports Grounds' legislation, so any extra income is not only welcome and desirable, but necessary.

You can obviously help by buying some lottery tickets, when approached. What we could really do with, however, is some more Agents to spread the word, and therefore the profits, even more widely. Don't forget that Agents themselves can use the system to make a few quid for themselves, or their own organisations. Terry Tandy will be pleased to give you the full gen if you ask him.

And while we're on the subject of the odd gamble, don't forget that the 300 Club is now in operation again. So successful was it last year, that it became a 400 Club in the end, which is good all round, because it raises the value of the cash prizes, as well as increases the revenue generated. Any member of the Social Club Committee will be pleased to tell you how to part from your money.

GANGWAY!

Sorry if you've heard this before, but the close season does tend to put a kink in the memory, and you may find yourself attempting to watch the game from the gangways. And the new fire regulations means that that is naughty, and might earn you a 'Tut! Tut!' from a Steward or two. Nothing we can do about it. Blame the Fire Officer, who is no doubt, as David Frost used to say, Doing a Grand Job.

NOSH AND THINGS

There's always something new at Kingsholm at the start of a new season, and this year it's the elegant edifice at the Worcester Street End. Here, it is hoped, we shall be dispensing food, drinks and useful items of Rugbiana at inordinately low prices, and you may feel you'd like to patronise same.

Like most similar ventures, it may take a while for the system to settle down, but we do now have a Club Shop, which many people have been advocating for a very long time.

HELICOPTER HIJACK

Our rugby-minded Mayor, Cllr. Archie Hartshorne, has gone to considerable lengths to be here today. He was committed to attend a fairly bibulous event aboard HMS 'Gloucester' down at Avonmouth, this lunchtime, which would have given him problems in getting back here in time for the kick-off. He got around it, however, by hijacking the Ship's Lynx helicopter and flying back. Ideally, he'd have liked to land on the ground, but that rather mind-boggled the Club, so he's coming in to the King's School playing field.

More — he's taken the Captain of the Ship hostage, and is bringing him along to the match as well. And very welcome too.

INTO SEPTEMBER

Wasn't it nice to see Gordon League playing a full Gloucester side here, as part of their Centenary celebrations? That's fairly unique, but is matched by next Tuesday evening's game, which I commend to your attention.

Following the Freedom Ceremony on Monday, the HMS 'Gloucester' side is playing a Mayor's Select Combination XV, right here, in order to air their nice new cherry-and-white strips. Should be well worth coming to see.

Next Saturday, we have our first John Courage League fixture, in the formidable shape of Moseley, and the lads would value your support that day.

Anyone who came along to the Trials will have been impressed by the wealth of talent on view, and your first realistic chance of seeing some of it happens on Tuesday week when United travel to Cheltenham. Well worth the trip to the Prince of Wales Stadium, I would have thought.

TAILPIECE

One sidelight on the HMS 'Gloucester' game. The Mayor had fully intended to run the line himself, but in the event, stood gracefully aside to allow our old friend Air Vice Marshal Tony Mason to perform that function.

Well, the aviatory legs aren't younger than the Civic ones, but they're certainly longer.

PETER ARNOLD



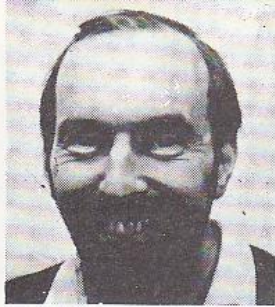
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TALKING RUGBY with Terry Phillips

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

Mike Teague and John Gadd, the back-row men now back at Kingsholm renewing their Gloucester partnership, have both been named by coach Mike Rafter in the South West squad for tomorrow's get-together at North Bristol RFC.

They are among eight players from Gloucester in the squad and Teague has underlined his determination to make an impact in the coming season.

He opted out of South West rugby last season, but says: "I'm delighted to be selected and I will be going along."

"John and I missed much of last season at Kingsholm, but we are determined to give it a go this time."

"We have both worked hard during the close and hopefully it will go well for both Gloucester and ourselves."

The other Gloucester players in the South West squad are Malcolm Preedy, Kevin Dunn, Richard Pascall, John Brain, skipper Marcus Hannaford and Richard Mogg.

John Etheridge has been preferred to the 16½ stone John Brain in the Gloucester first XV today, but it is the experienced Brain, a former England under 23 international, who has been named for the South West.

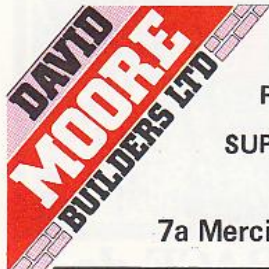
The absence of flanker Ian Smith from the South West squad is a surprise, but coach Rafter, who has taken over from Jack Rowell this season, insists there is still a good chance of other players breaking into the squad.

"We have named a preliminary squad, but there are bound to be changes," says Rafter. "We will have people watching all the top matches and acting according to how people are playing."

The South West play Leinster at Bath on Monday September 26, Australia at Bristol's Memorial Ground on Wednesday October 26 plus three Divisional matches including a clash with London at Kingsholm on Saturday December 3.



Kevin Dunn... chasing a place with the South West Divisional team this season. He is currently in the England training squad along with Richard Pascall and is among eight Gloucester players in the South West squad.



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