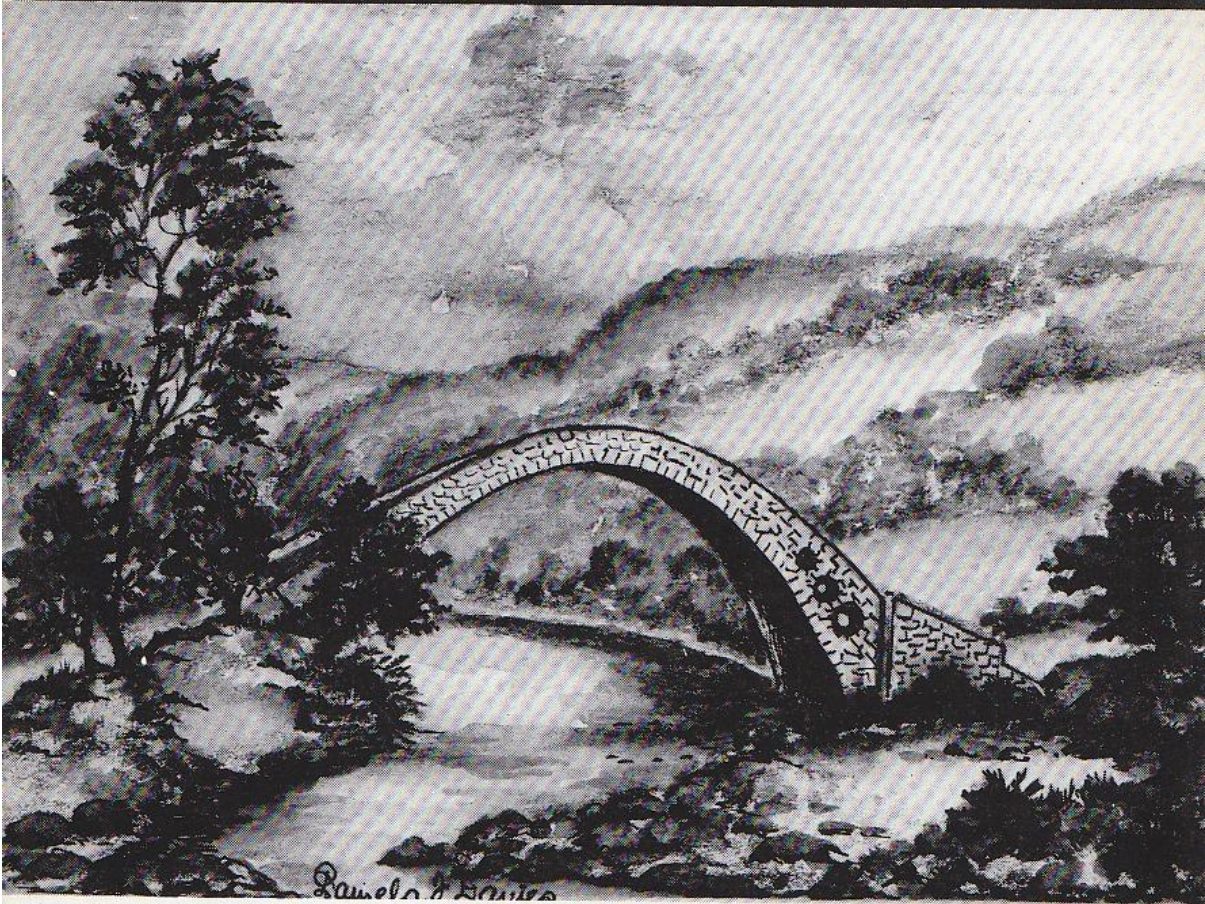




**PONTYPRIDD
RUGBY
FOOTBALL
CLUB**



LUCKY PROGRAMME

Nº 265

**£10 SPONSORED BY
BOWNS SOUTH WALES
FORD MAIN DEALER**

To be collected on Match Day

Pontypridd

VERSUS

Gloucester

on Saturday 17th September 1988
at Sardis Road, Pontypridd, Kick off 3.00pm

PROGRAMME - 30p

Pontypridd

15	JOHNATHAN MASON	FULL BACK
14	GORDON LOXTON	RIGHT WING
13	STEELE LEWIS	RIGHT CENTRE
12	CHRIS CONWAY	LEFT CENTRE
11	EDWIN FORD	LEFT WING
10	ANDY PHILLIPS	OUTSIDE HALF
9	ROBERT DAVIES	SCRUM HALF
1	GARETH DAVIES	PROP
2	PHIL JOHN (Capt)	HOOKER
3	PAUL KNIGHT	PROP
4	STEVE BAIN	LOCK
5	BLEDDYN DAVIES	LOCK
6	NICK SAUNDERS	FLANKER
7	DAVID HOPKINS	FLANKER
8	SIMON KING	No.8

Replacements
C. Arnold, H. Jones

Gloucester

T. SMITH	15
N. PRICE	14
D. CUMMINS	13
R. MACLEAN	12
N. MARMENT	11
M. HAMLIN	10
M. HANNAFORD (Capt)	9
M. PREEDY	1
K. DUNN	2
R. PASCALL	3
J. BRAIN	4
J. ETHERIDGE	5
J. GADD	6
I. SMITH	7
R. FOWKE	8

Replacements
N. Mathews, S. Hanson

Referee: Mr. W. D. BEVAN (W.R.U.)

Today's Match is sponsored by Britannia Building Society

The Match Balls are sponsored by J. Gareth Thomas (Travel), Llanover Dairy,
and Lockyer & Peacey



the natural choice

CLUB NOTES

Sardis Road at last. It has been many years since it took the senior team so long to open their home fixtures. It's good to be back! In saying that, it has an extra spice today by the quality of our visitors - Gloucester. They have started this season in great style, promising to be a real threat on the English rugby scene to the supremacy of the Bath of recent years. Our game at Kingsholm last season was very exciting, finally being decided by better Gloucester goal kicking. Today's encounter has all the portents of a great game.

One reassuring factor has been very clear - at all our three away games so far, the Pontypridd support remains as strong and enthusiastic as ever - Stradey Park - Pandy Park and the Memorial Ground will testify to this.

Our early playing performances give rise to a quiet optimism, especially in view of some of the quality rugby played in the second half of the Cross Keys match. Clive Jones and his fellow selectors have declared a squad policy and they have shown in these early games that they are following this in a sensible and constructive way.

New players who have made an early impression have been Andy Phillips, 31 points in 3 games and back row forward David Hopkins. Essentially though there has been clear evidence of good team play, well organised and thoroughly prepared. Unfortunately, injuries are already proving to be a problem - Simon Griffin, Simon King, Sean O'Sullivan, Andy Carpenter, Mike Thomas and Jonathan Arnold have already fallen foul and are unavailable for selection. Furthermore, Jonathan Mason strained his back at the Welsh squad session at Swansea and is doubtful for today's match.

On a special note, today should see the

return the return to Sardis Road of our Club Captain, Ceri Jones. Whether playing in today's game or not 'Croeso Ceri', and the best of luck for a great season, both individually and as our captain.

While our minds have been concentrating on the senior team the Athletic XV have played two games, losing against Caerphilly away and beating Cross Keys United at home. The Youth team have won both their games, against St. Peter's at home by 80 points and Pontypool away by 21 points to 15. They seem set for another good season and we hope that all the youth players aspire to gain first team places and representative honours through the Pontypridd club.

We are pleased to welcome this afternoon's match sponsors - 'The Britannia Building Society' and their guests. The Society is represented by Tony Curtis, the Pontypridd Branch Manager. They are a large national organisation and we thank them for their generous support to Pontypridd RFC and the local community. We all hope that they will enjoy their afternoon at Sardis Road.

The match balls are sponsored by J. Gareth Thomas, Pontypridd; Llanover Dairy, Pontypridd; and Lockyer and Peacey, Ferndale. We thank them for their support.

Programme prize draw - today's lucky number programme prize draw is worth £20, which has been donated by Bown of South Wales. It must be claimed on the day of the match otherwise it will be carried forward as an accumulator for the next home match. The winner can claim directly after the game by approaching the programme organiser near the supporters shop at the main clubhouse gates.

Rod's Chit Chat

THAT OLD CHERRY AND WHITE MAGIC!

Just to keep our very welcome Gloucester visitors firmly in the picture, let me say at once that we have all seen, marked and inwardly digested their tremendous results against Swansea and Moseley. This means something that will hardly come as a surprise - that Gloucester may very well earn themselves a title or two this season. It makes their visit here to Sardis Road even more titillating than usual, but I find myself wondering whether the new Courage Leagues set up in England really does have the effect on Anglo-Welsh games that has been claimed from some quarters. One of the arguments employed by the anti-leaguers was that it would devalue those often eagerly awaited clashes because the league would become so important that the English Clubs would field only makeshift sides for these games. And indeed, there seems to be evidence that this has actually happened on one or two occasions last season, with much respected sides from over the border going down on Welsh soil by unrealistically high scores. If there is any truth in this, (and there was not much evidence of it on the first Saturday of the season, when the Welsh clubs lost their Anglo-Welsh encounters by Eight games to one, if I remember correctly). I cannot see the situation lasting beyond the birth pains of the Courage League. Traditional pride cannot be thrown out of the window as easily as all that. In any case I cannot see the Gloucester club indulging in such fanciful ideas. Their feet are too firmly set on the ground, and having always been a border town, they enjoy their victories over we Welsh with tremendous gusto, although always with the greatest good humour and hospitality - particularly the latter, where they tend to overdo things a bit! It would, I think, be a sad day for us all if these games were unfair devalued into what would be in effect second fifteen tussles - for remember, leagues are at hand in Wales too. Perhaps - who knows, - perhaps the day will come when we will see the often - proclaimed National League, embracing all Welsh and English clubs in its giant embrace. And here we must pause to let the shrieks of horror from our dedicated anti-leaguers die away.

NOT SO BAD

We havent done so badly ourselves, if it comes to that, especially since today marks our first home appearance of the season. Our usual fairly slothful start at Llanelli (will the advent of leagues rotate this

fixture, by the way?) means that yet again we let slip a game we could have won, but two splendid away wins at Cross Keys and Glamorgan Wanderers, scoring 67 points against 18, leaves us at least with intimations of immortality stirring in our breasts. That most confident and yet down-to-earth of coaches, Mr Clive Jones, is adamant that we are on the right lines, and on the evidence of what he has done since coming to Sardis Road, who is there to say him nay? At Cross Keys in particular, his style of play was seen in all its glory, and anyone who thinks his philosophy does not include a 15-man running capability, then they have a big re-think coming. Of course, we exerted a complete forward dominance before this happened, but then this is the very cornerstone of his policy. After all, is not this what the game is all about? Mr Clive Jones knows as well as anyone else that an untried and tiring Cross Keys pack are one thing, and for instance today's Gloucester pack are quite another thing, but his cornerstone remains unmoved. May the Club's judicial and thoughtful programme of strengthening certain positions give more power to his elbow.

RIPENESS ISN'T ALL!

Talking of strengthening, it is noticeable that the club are carefully selecting the new blood they need, not from the ranks of the disaffected 'Star Players' on their annual march around the clubs, but from the 'unknown' young men, with all their rugby in front of them, who display the signs of as yet immature quality that has a good chance of blossoming into the real thing. What a wise policy! One that I applaud loud and long. Gloucester, for instance, have always done this, recruiting unknowns from the ranks of local rugby and turning them with little or no ado into first-class players. For, having selected them, they then use them, not keep them in limbo until they return, disaffected, to their home clubs. Ponty have, I hope, recognised that with possible league rugby just around the corner, they must be one of those clubs that are mentally and physically prepared with a young side, not one of those who will be desperately chasing to catch up with the tide of events. "There is a tide in the affairs of men which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune" said the greatest of them all, not actually a Gloucesterman, but one who was born not a million miles away from that fair city. Will of Stratford could well have been speaking to our Committee. **R.T.**