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GLOUCESTER RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

30_p
**OFFICIAL
PROGRAMME**

GLOUCESTER

v

EBBW VALE

Wednesday
12th October, 1988

Kick off 7 p.m.

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The Citizen



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WE SHALL SEE WHAT WE SHALL SEE

Something very strange has been happening in the Valleys of late. Not to mention other assorted bits of Welsh landscape.

English teams started the season by running rampant over their Cambrian counterparts. Welsh sides have beaten others by quite unreasonable margins, only to find themselves on the other side of a similar equation next week. Players have been moving from club to club in a sort of Musical Forwards game. Swansea couldn't raise a second fifteen to take on our United.

It's all very odd, and could be the beginnings of a sinister Welsh plot to put it over us poor ignorant English yet again.

All of which makes this, our second chance to welcome a leading Welsh side this season, a very intriguing encounter. But then, games against Ebbw Vale usually are.

There hasn't been much between our two sides over the past couple of seasons, although it surprised me a little to realise that we have to go back to October 1984 to find a game which Gloucester actually won — by 24 points to 17 at Ebbw Vale. Since then we've lost, 19-22, at Kingsholm, 7-9 at Kingsholm again, and by 14-17 in last year's away match.

So, just because Ebbw Vale don't get as much publicity as some other clubs, don't run away with the idea that we're in for a romp because we beat Swansea.

Of course, at the time of writing, I don't know how we fared in last Saturday's Wasps game, but it is bound to have been a hard one, and some Gloucester players may still be a little shell shocked. Alternatively, one or two people may be rested in accordance with the RFU's request to limit the number of games which top players take part in. So I can't say anything sensible about the comparative merits of the two sides. But we're in for a good game anyway.

Fears have been expressed that the new English League structure — and the suggested Welsh one if it ever gets off the ground — could have a disastrous effect on traditional Anglo-Welsh fixtures. Which would be a pity for everyone concerned.

That's for the future however. For tonight, let's lay back and enjoy it.

And, as always, we hope that 'Ebbw', and their supporters, have a thoroughly good evening. And how about letting us win, for a change?

THANKS TO THE 'CITIZEN'

We always have reason to say 'Thanks' to the 'Citizen' of course. Our only 'real' local paper consistently covers Gloucester games with accuracy and efficiency, and has done for longer than anyone on the ground this evening can possibly remember.

Tonight's a bit special, however, because they have been generous enough to act as Sponsors for the game. For which we're extremely grateful.

It might surprise you to learn that the good old 'Citizen' now reaches around 120,000 people, and is rising, which isn't a bad record considering the increased competition from other media, including an extra local radio station and a whole clutch of 'freebies'.

But increasing circulation isn't the only change which has happened at the 'Citizen' since last they honoured us with their presence. You'll have read about the sophisticated new printing plant at Staverton, now being 'run in' and ready for a big official opening later in the year. That doesn't mean that the whole kit and caboodle is moving though. You'll still be making the traditional walk along St. John's Lane to place your small ad, or to buy a photograph.

The new plant does make other innovations possible, however. The ability to use colour, for example, does exist. Watch this space, as they say.

Another change at St. John's Lane is the arrival of a new Editor, following the retirement of Colin Walker. His name is Mike Lowe, and Terry Phillips tells me that he's "very much into Sport." I'm not absolutely sure whether he's here tonight, but we very much hope so, if only so that we can express our appreciation of the work which Terry Phillips does, in his capacity as a perspicacious Rugby reporter, as well as for his contribution to the Programme each week, and to the forthcoming Club Year Book.

Terry's gone up in the world, actually. He's now Sports Editor, assisted by the polymathic Pete Savage, and by Claire Middleton, who is a member of that still-rare breed a feminine Sports Journalist.

Claire has been covering events at Gloucester City, but she hasn't been turned loose on Rugby yet. No doubt the time will come, and we hope she's along this evening too, so that we can all impress her with what jolly good chaps we are.

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

So it's all happening at the 'Citizen'. We wish them luck in their new ventures, and thank them again, not just for this evening, but for everything they do for us.

... AND TO BRITISH GAS

British Gas have been generous enough to provide the match ball this evening — not for the first time, I may add. Having just received my dividend on my British gas shares, I feel quite kindly disposed to them.

So will tonight's winners, because part of their generosity is to present a cut-glass Stewart Crystal rose bowl to the victorious side. No lads — you can't drink your beer out of it.

This gesture is part of a much larger contribution to Rugby. They provide just the same sort of support to a whole range of Anglo-Welsh games, backing up their sponsorship of the 'British Gas Challenge', the annual England v. Wales fixture in the Home Championship.

Every English and Welsh club should therefore be grateful to them. We certainly are, and hope they have a good evening at Kingsholm.

LET'S GET THIS STRAIGHT

... Saturday's game against Newport is an AWAY match, whatever it might say in some fixture lists. In the trade we call it a cock-up. Sorry.

On the other hand, it does give you a chance to come along and see United against the same (or similar, to be precise) opposition, which can't be bad.

Saturday 22nd sees us travel to Liverpool St. Helens in the League, and no doubt the lads would be pleased to have your support, if you fancy a trip to 'Bread' country. It will be interesting to see how the new wonder-boy scrum half, Dewi Morris, who the small print says is qualified for England, gets on against our own Marcus Hannaford, who, I'm sure, is anxious to get back into the international reckoning.

We thrashed Liverpool St. Helens last season, but they're one of those sides who are difficult to beat on their own patch, so it might be a good game.

NO DRINKS PLEASE — WE'RE SCOUSE

Terry Tandy has had a letter from his opposite number at Liverpool St. Helens, pointing out that no alcoholic liquor is allowed on the ground at Church Road.

I ask you — as if we would!

To be fair, they are trying to be helpful. They have this club rule, and tell all visiting clubs about it beforehand, to give them a chance to warn visiting supporters before they set out. In principal, I thoroughly agree with them, but I do just have reservations about the traditional hip flask carried on cold days, which doesn't do any harm to anyone, unless you drop it on your foot. On the other hand, we're not as close to two major Soccer clubs as they are, so perhaps the potential problem is probably not as great.

Anyway, as you know very well, we don't encourage unreasonable imbibing on Kingsholm either, which is one advantage of having a clubhouse entrance outside the turnstiles.

I remember a group of young loudmouths — on port they were — being warned off last season, and that's as it should be.

Still — you have been warned.

NO RUGBY

Peter Ford tells me that the game against Rugby, down for November 5th, has been cancelled. I have no idea why, unless it's because William Webb Ellis isn't available that weekend.

At the moment, it's doubtful whether another game will be arranged, but we'll keep you informed.

AND NO COMMERCIALS

I'll give the 'commercials a break this week, and not bother to remind you about the Lottery, 300 Club, Social Club Tickets, the Shop or posters. I'm sure you're glad about that.

TAILPIECE

Do you see that the England Selectors are up to their old tricks, and trying to pick players out of position again? The proposal to shift Dean Richards from No. 8 to lock must raise a wry grin or two around this part of the world. On the faces of Nigel Pomphrey and Mike Teague, for example.

I wonder what John Orwin thinks about it? I suppose he could always move back to No. 8, which is where we first saw him.

PETER ARNOLD



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TALKING RUGBY with . . .
The Citizen sports editor Terry Phillips

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

The second-row partnership of Nigel Scrivens and John Etheridge is a relatively new one for Gloucester Rugby Club, but it is a combination which is bringing the best out of both players.

Scrivens and Etheridge proved in the 19-3 Courage Championship victory against Wasps they are a potent force in the pack and they could be in harness for some time to come.

Scrivens joined Gloucester seven years ago from Cirencester and he has played well over 100 first XV matches, while 23-year-old Etheridge is nearing the 70 mark.

It took 30-year-old Scrivens, a 6 ft 4 ins, 17½ stones forward, some time to make his mark at Kingsholm after switching from Cirencester.

He was known as a useful reserve lock during his first few years with Gloucester before gradually establishing himself ahead of the rest.

"I came to Kingsholm from Cirencester with high hopes of doing well," says Scrivens, "Like many other people I felt I was a pretty good player at first local level and ready for a go at Kingsholm.

"But the step-up is a big one and I found the pace of rugby just too hot to handle for some time. I thought I would never adapt at one stage.

"Gradually, though, you become a little fitter and I stuck at it. I feel confident in my ability nowadays, but I have not fooled myself into thinking that's it.

"In first class rugby there is always somebody pushing for first team recognition and nobody is ever really fully established."

During his early years at Kingsholm Scrivens was a second-row reserve to Steve Boyle, John Fidler, John Orwin and then John Brain.

The season Scrivens has been first choice for most of the big games, playing against Swansea, Moseley and Wasps.

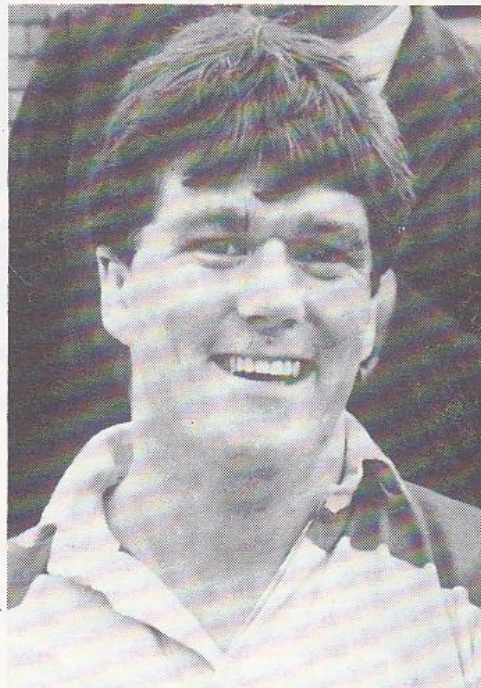
He was out for five matches after breaking a bone in a hand, but that injury is healed now and his partnership with 'Too Tall' Etheridge is gathering strength.

And Scrivens played a vital part in the victory against Wasps when he popped up for a vital try in the first half.

A flurry of bodies crashed over the line and nobody except the players knew who had scored until after the

match, but Scrivens was delighted, saying: "I did not have far to go. The ball popped up and I just had to put it down. I don't even know who it came from."

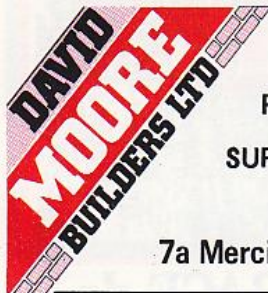
It was a first try of the season for Scrivens and his seventh in total for the Cherry and Whites at first team level.



Nigel Scrivens

COURAGE CHAMPIONSHIP

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|----------------|---|---|---|---|----|----|-----|
| 1 Bath | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 64 | 24 | 6 |
| 2 Nottingham | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 46 | 24 | 6 |
| 3 Gloucester | 3 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 65 | 31 | 4 |
| 4 Bristol | 3 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 39 | 16 | 4 |
| 5 Leicester | 3 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 53 | 45 | 4 |
| 6 Orrell | 3 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 48 | 42 | 4 |
| 7 St. Helens | 3 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 30 | 44 | 2 |
| 8 Harlequins | 3 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 39 | 55 | 2 |
| 9 Rosslyn Park | 3 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 28 | 44 | 2 |
| 10 Wasps | 3 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 32 | 49 | 2 |
| 11 Waterloo | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 27 | 45 | 0 |
| 12 Moseley | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 16 | 68 | 0 |



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