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30_p

OFFICIAL PROGRAMME

GLOUCESTER

v

LONDON SCOTTISH

Saturday
7th January, 1989

Kick off 3 p.m.

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TARTAN TRADITION

It's good that such traditional fixtures as today's can continue, in spite of the pressures exerted by the League system. Obviously, the Courage Clubs Championship has its attractions, and its advantages, but it would be a pity if the rearranged fixture lists meant that we had to throw the baby out with the bathwater in implementing it, and New Year wouldn't seem the same without London Scottish.

Last season, away at Richmond Athletic ground, we drew the game, eight points each. I was too hungover to make the trip myself, but it did remind me of another occasion, some years ago, when the London Scottish match ended in that rarest of all results, a pointless draw. Yet it was a highly entertaining game, for all that.

I also have fond memories of the London Scottish Clubhouse. You'll remember that, a few seasons ago, no less than six Gloucester forwards were called up into the 'Rest' pack for an England Trial at Twickenham. A few of us went along, and saw the 'England' side acutely embarrassed by having to rely on a last-kick drop goal to draw the game — and John Fidler has always maintained that he should have been given the disallowed try which would have compounded the felony.

We felt quite cheerful, but thought that, not wishing to pay Twickenham bar prices, we'd trot off down to London Scottish, where Gloucester were playing that day.

The welcome was immense, the beer excellent, and the bangers, chips and beans plentiful and inexpensive. A good time was emphatically had by all.

Matson supporters will also remember that ground. Their John Player Cup fixture against London Scottish on the Saturday, forced Gloucester to play Richmond, on the same ground, on the following Sunday, one of the few occasions when such a fixture has ever been fulfilled on the Sabbath.

As I remember it, we were quite happy to miss London Scottish, that season, because they had proved quite a bogey side for us in previous seasons, being one of the few sides to have beaten Gloucester in the Cup at Kingsholm.

So, one way and another, we have plenty of reasons to make London Scottish very welcome today. Have a great time, chaps, and lang may y'r lum reek!

THANKS TO SERCO-SECURICOR

If we have old friends playing here today, then it's only right that we have old friends sponsoring the game too. Serco-Securicor, who until almost exactly two years ago were called RCA-Securicor, have again been generous enough to give us their backing.

The last time they were here, early in last season, they were in their first few months following a workforce takeover of their company, which involved everyone working for them becoming shareholders. Obviously, at that time, everyone was working his ears off to make the thing work. It's nice to be able to report that everything has gone well, and that they have gone from strength to strength — to such an extent that they are now a Public Company listed on the Stock Exchange.

For anyone who doesn't know, Serco-Securicor are based at 7MU, RAF Quedgeley, and handle some highly important and demanding distribution and storage contracts for the Ministry of Defence.

That takes them fairly far afield, and though Manager Ray Pocock can't recall any Scots in his contingent today, he can point to people from as far away as Southampton and several other points around the compass. Not forgetting, he hastens to add, a few Welshmen — possibly left over from the Bridgend game.

It's good to see them here again, and we are obviously indebted to them for their generosity. I'm quite sure everyone will have a highly enjoyable time, and we hope that their progress in 1989 will be as dramatic as hitherto. Best of luck, ladies and gents!

TIGERS NEXT WEEK

Next Saturday, we're back on the Championship trail, and the opposition is formidable. Leicester, complete with Dusty Hare MBE, will be here, out to prove that there are one or two sides around in England, apart from Wasps, Harlequins and Bath.

We'd agree with them there, but we shall have a point or two to make ourselves. Emphatically a game not to be missed.

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On the following Wednesday, we have a tricky trip to Pontypool, who may not be the force they were, but will still be hard to beat on their own turf. Then it's back home again on the 21st for an interesting fixture against Blackheath, no mugs, these days, and paying their first visit for many years.

We finish the month with the Cup trip to Brixham, so January 1989 is an intriguing month indeed.

BRIXHAM TRIP

You'll no doubt be beginning to wonder about arrangements for the Pilkington Cup match at Brixham. There won't be a train, partly because the geography makes the trip a bit expensive, but arrangements for coaches are in hand.

Nothing is settled yet, but I hope to be able to give you chapter and verse next week. Although, by the time you read this, there may be more information, and you could always ask in the Clubhouse or the Shop.

It's fair to warn you, though, that Brixham have a very small ground with a tiny stand. No doubt they will be making temporary arrangements, but 'sitting down' tickets are sure to be in short supply.

More, when I know it.

LUCKY WINNERS

Terry Close has been kind enough to send me the list of winners of the December '400 Club' Draw. Nice to see some very familiar names among them.

The £25.00 prize was won by H. W. Pittman, who I see had bought number 400, so it looks as if a late decision has paid off.

£10.00 Winners were Mike Cass (no. 331), Mrs. E. Wadley (163), Reg. Clissold (321) L. Brown (221) and Bernard Kibble (84).

Well done! No doubt it helped with the Christmas Cheer.

BARBARIAN MIKE

This is the first opportunity I've had to congratulate Mike Teague on his late inclusion in the Barbarian side which so conspicuously beat Leicester, just after Christmas. I've read or heard no reports about how he got on, but the experience won't have done him any harm when the 'Tigers' come here next week.

Judging by the way he was going against Bridgend, it didn't do his enthusiasm any harm either. A Cap this season, even at No. 6, now seems more and more a possibility. A lot probably depends on his trip to furrin parts with the England Squad. He'll probably enjoy the sunshine, anyway.

GANGWAY!

As there are likely to be a fair few of us next week, for the match against Leicester, perhaps you wouldn't mind if I reminded you that all gangways have to be kept clear by direction of the Fire Officer? So please don't be tempted into watching from that sort of vantage point.

And if you think that Gloucester RFC has been unfairly treated, in terms of the expenditure incurred at the ground, due to the Safety at Sports Ground Act, you might like to reflect that the legislation is set to be extended to all sporting venues which can accommodate over 500 people!

TAILPIECE

Do you notice that the claims that William Webb Ellis 'invented' the game are being refuted in some quarters? Historians are now saying that our Saturday entertainment is directly descended from 'Great Foote Balle', which was played in the streets between indeterminate numbers of worthies from neighbouring towns and villages.

Apparently, it got to be something of a problem too, somewhat reminiscent of our own 'lager lout' syndrome. So much so that authorities had to take some action. I particularly like the Proclamation of King Edward II, dated 1314, which read, in part: "Forasmuch as there is great noise in the City, caused by hustling over large balls."

There's no answer to that. But it's ironic that the first monarch to attempt to abolish Rugby now lies buried in Gloucester Cathedral!

PETER ARNOLD



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

Ruari Maclean, the centre who has not appeared for Gloucester's first XV since the Courage Championship defeat against Bristol, is back in line for a call-up to the Scotland team.

Maclean, aged 26, was selected for today's Scotland trial at Murrayfield when the selectors take another step towards deciding on their team for the Five Nations Championships.

Maclean has missed recent Gloucester games through injury and commitments in preparing for the Scottish trials.

The Crypt School, Gloucester teacher has played for Scotland B and for a Scotland XV on a tour to Zimbabwe, but he has yet to earn a full Scottish cap.

Maclean has made 81 appearances for Gloucester's first XV, scoring 15 tries.

He has developed a solid partnership with Damian Cummins in the centre. Cummins is also available for Scotland, but he was not included in the trials today.

The Cherry and Whites resume their Courage Championship programme next weekend when they play Leicester at home followed by a clash with Wasps, also at Kingsholm, a week later.

The match against Wasps is followed by a trip to play Brixham in a Pilkington Cup third round match.

Gloucester need to bounce back from last weeks disappointing 23-3 defeat against Moseley, away against London Scottish today before they embark on the League and Cup matches.



Up they go. John Etheridge (left) and John Gadd in line-out action



Nigel Scrivens moves in against Bridgend with Ian Smith on the ground

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