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GLOUCESTER RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

30p

OFFICIAL PROGRAMME

GLOUCESTER v BLACKHEATH

Saturday
21st January, 1989

Kick off 3 p.m.

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WELCOME TO 'THE CLUB'

It's many years since Blackheath played at Kingsholm, but some of us are venerable enough to remember when their visits were eagerly awaited, and when the red-black-shirts could take on anyone in England and Wales with every chance of winning.

Not that they are anyone's pushovers today. After some seasons in something of a decline, they are now in the process of a significant revival, and have some highly creditable scalps under their belts.

At the moment, they are running sixth in Division Three of the Courage Clubs Championship, with every chance of improving on that, before all the tumult and the shouting dies, and next week, as ever was, they have a highly challenging Pilkington Cup engagement, when they play hosts to Waterloo at the Rectory Field.

So it will be a testing run-out for them today — just the sort of preparation they need for next Saturday's shenanigans. Anyway, it's always good to see fresh faces around, and Blackheath would be welcome for that reason, if for no other.

But there is at least one other. We reckon that we have a fairly historic Club, well into its second century, but no-one can compare with 'The Club', as they have always been known, in that respect. Quite simply, they're the oldest club around.

In fact, founded in 1858, they took part in the first club game recorded — against Richmond — during the 1863/4 season. Apparently, one of the problems in those days was that almost everyone who played — schools, services, hospitals, universities etc. — had a different set of rules, and someone had to agree just who was doing what and to whom before the game could start.

Blackheath were also one of the twenty clubs, which included such defunct organisations as Flamingoes and Queen's House, which founded the original Rugby Football Union. So we could hardly have opponents with a better pedigree than we have today.

All of which makes this an auspicious occasion. Let's lay back and enjoy it.

THANKS TO TELECOM — AGAIN

We're always grateful to our generous Sponsors, obviously, but when they're an organisation which regularly grants us that privilege *twice* in a season, our thanks become positively incoherent.

Since they were last with us, British Telecom have had quite an upheaval. They've moved from their building in Great Western Road — which was hardly a thing of beauty and a joy forever — to a complex consisting of five new red-brick buildings on the prestigious Olympus Park, at Quedgeley. PR lady, Julie Maden, tells me that all went smoothly, as far as any removal ever does, and they're happily enthroned in their nice new offices.

One reason for the move was to install a brand-new computer system, dedicated to Customer Services. For the first time, they have details of all their 320,000 customers in this region on one database, accessible immediately to all Departments within British Telecom. This should obviously speed everything up, including the way they deal with enquiries and complaints — if there ever are any.

Julie makes one rather nice observation. "It seems appropriate," she writes, "that we should be welcoming Blackheath, the oldest Rugby Club in England, just when we are introducing the most modern high-tech equipment!"

Certainly a contrast. I wonder what the Founding Fathers of 'The Club' would have made of Telecom Gold?

Anyway — we wish Telecom well, and hope everyone who is with them today has a terrific time.

JUST REWARD

"Teague has been in superb form this season, and deserves to win a place".

Such comment is music to any Kingsholm Regular's ears, and when it comes from such a source as our old sparring partner, Terry O'Connor of the 'Daily Mail' it is all the more melodious.

There is no doubt that Mike Teague richly deserves his recall to the England side, not only on his form this season, but for the consistent all-round excellence of his play over his entire career. It's just a shame that the best No. 8 in England has to be played out of position at No. 6 — where, in John Gadd, we also have the best performer around.

It has to be said that, to some extent, Mike's absence from the England reckoning, over the past four seasons, has been self-inflicted. His flirtation with Cardiff, and his voluntary exile from the South West Division must have seemed to him like good ideas at the time, but in the event, didn't do his England

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

chances any good at all. However, it's still an amateur game (just), and any man has a right to play for who he likes, when he likes.

All that's behind us now, however, and we all hope that Mike Teague can show the storming form of which we know he is capable, and embark on a lengthy and memorable England career. One thing's for sure — the Opposition will certainly know he's around.

And won't it be nice to see that familiar figure, socks rolled down, charging around the field in his accustomed style?

Well done Mike — all things come to him who waits.

UNITED IN RESIDENCE

Our next home First XV fixture isn't until February 17th, when the Competition is provided by some West Country outfit called Bath, of whom I seem to have heard, somewhere.

That means, of course, that the United will be taking command for the next three weeks, taking on Newport High School Old Boys, Bristol and Plymouth, in that order. In other words, we shall be seeing some excellent Rugby over that period, and your presence is earnestly recommended.

Of course, the 'Firsts' aren't exactly taking a holiday. Next Saturday is the Cup game at Brixham, on the following Friday evening (please note), we're visiting Bristol, with a trip to Aberavon on Saturday, February 11th.

BRIXHAM TRIP

As previously announced, coaches for next Saturday's trip to Brixham will cost £5.00 a head, and full details can be obtained from Trevor Pritchard in the Clubhouse. There's no train, this time.

There won't be any tickets, either, because Brixham have made the decision to charge a flat £2.00 admission at the gate, from whichever vantage point you want to watch the game.

Be warned, too, that you'll be unlikely to get a place in the tiny stand, if that's your usual preference.

If you're going down under your own steam, don't forget that the kick-off time is 2.30, and not at 3.00, as you're probably used to. Apparently, there's plenty of parking at St. Mary's Bay Caravan Park, which is within a pebble's throw of the Ground, so there's no problem there. I happen to know 'Mudstones', as that area is known locally, so if you are driving, perhaps the way to find the ground is to follow the signposts to St. Mary's Bay.

Hope the weather's kind. It might be a nice day out.

COURAGE CLUBS CHAMPIONSHIP

Just a final thought on last Saturday's annihilation of Leicester.

It was a pity that Dusty Hare couldn't make it, due to a late injury, but the absence of kickable penalties probably meant that his absence wouldn't have made a lot of difference anyway. How long is it, I wonder, since any club put seven tries on the Tigers? And five of them were scored by the backs, in spite of the undoubted dominance which our pack provided.

This leaves us sitting in second spot in the Table, but only on points difference, so the more tries we can score from here on may well be vital. We now have two tricky away games, against Orrell and Harlequins, so the final game, against Nottingham at Kingsholm, could turn out to be a bit important.

WELCOME YOUR WORSHIP!

Our popular Mayor, Archie Hartshorne, is very much a Kingsholm Regular, of course, but today he is here in his official capacity, chain and all. So it's only right that I proffer an official welcome to Kingsholm.

Archie is, of course, the latest in a long line of Civic Dignitaries who have been avid Gloucester supporters. A few weeks ago, I counted four Mayors, six Sheriffs and one Deputy Mayor, all in the Stand at the same time. And that didn't count one past Mayor of Tewkesbury, who was here as well.

I wonder if any other club can say as much?

TAILPIECE

I have a message from Roger Quittenton, the distinguished Referee who officiated at the Leicester game, and who got a rough ride from the crowd, even before the game started.

He says that he knows the Kingsholm crowd of old, knows that it's all good-natured, and, in fact, thoroughly enjoyed himself on that day.

One thing about Mr. Quittenton. You always know who's in charge when he's on the field.

PETER ARNOLD



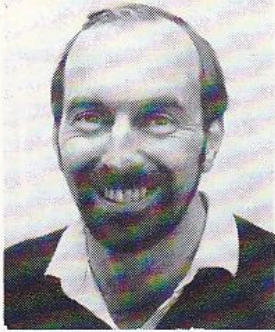
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TALKING RUGBY with . . .
The Citizen sports editor Terry Phillips



Gloucester fly-half Mike Hamlin on the run during the 28-0 win against Leicester at Kingsholm last Saturday. Richard Mogg is the winger preparing to receive the pass.

Gloucester did their chances of earning runners-up spot in the Courage Clubs Championship the power of good with a 28-0 win against Leicester at Kingsholm.

The Cherry and Whites are still five points behind leaders Bath, who look assured of the title, and level with Nottingham and Orrell.

Gloucester still have to play both Nottingham (April 22) and Orrell (April 8) this season, but on the form they showed against Leicester they have every chance of winning both.

It was a display which chairman of selectors Alan Brinn said was "As near perfection as anything we have played since I have been involved with selection."

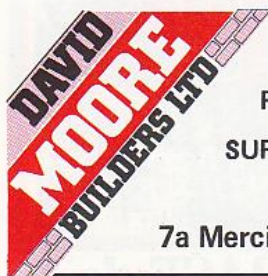
Next season Gloucester will be facing North London club Saracens, who have already clinched promotion from National Division Two. They are six points clear of second placed Coventry.



Missed him! Winger Jim Breeze launches himself into a gallant effort to stop a Leicester attack, but it's too late. In the background is Gloucester touch judge Brian Glanville.

COURAGE CHAMPIONSHIP
National Division One

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|----------------|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|-----|
| 1 Bath | 8 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 191 | 58 | 16 |
| 2 Gloucester | 8 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 175 | 74 | 11 |
| 3 Nottingham | 8 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 108 | 87 | 11 |
| 4 Orrell | 8 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 117 | 112 | 11 |
| 5 Bristol | 8 | 5 | 0 | 3 | 107 | 69 | 10 |
| 6 Wasps | 8 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 140 | 109 | 9 |
| 7 Leicester | 8 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 148 | 153 | 9 |
| 8 Harlequins | 8 | 3 | 0 | 5 | 130 | 146 | 6 |
| 9 Rosslyn Park | 8 | 2 | 0 | 6 | 97 | 169 | 4 |
| 10 Moseley | 8 | 2 | 0 | 6 | 66 | 179 | 4 |
| 11 Waterloo | 8 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 97 | 144 | 3 |
| 12 Liverpool | 8 | 1 | 0 | 7 | 80 | 156 | 2 |



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