



FOUNDED 1873

THE GLOUCESTER RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

President: Canon H. M. Hughes BA.

v SARACENS

Saturday, November 25th 1989
Kick-Off 3.00pm



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(Cherry & White)

17 H/T 6

9. M. Hannaford

1. ~~M. Preedy~~ (I) H. WINDO
2. K. Dunn
3. R. Pascall
4. N. Scrivens
5. J. Brain
6. P. Ashmead
7. I. Smith
8. B. Clark

J. Hawker

(I) — International

[illegible]

(Black, White & Red)

21 F/T 21

9. F. Steadman (Capt.)

1. J. Leonard
2. J. McFarland
3. R. Andrews
4. R. Malone
5. L. Adamson
6. C. Tarbuck
7. A. Phillips
8. B. Clarke

17. A. Dougherty

Referee: D. HUDSON (Manchester Society)

TOUCH LINES

by
Peter Arnold

SURPRISE PACKAGE

One thing about league systems, in any sport you can name. They do throw up surprise packages with remarkable regularity. As far as the Courage League 1988/9 is concerned, there's no doubt that the side which has amazed everyone has been Saracens.

They certainly did well to win promotion to Division One this season, and I don't suppose were under any illusions about the quality of the opposition which that elevation presented to them. So far, they have beaten all but two of the sides they've met, and that's a very considerable achievement indeed. If you want confirmation of that, Bedford were promoted at the same time, and look what's happened to them.

I confess, when I watched Leicester run Saracens ragged on 'Rugby Special' a couple of weeks ago, I rather felt that they'd had their run — and good luck to them — but that they had now been found out. They then confounded me by bouncing right back and putting it across the high-flying Harlequins side, last Saturday. So they are undoubtedly an outfit which needs to be taken very seriously indeed; after all, lesser teams could well have folded after the Leicester experience.

As far as I can remember, Saracens have never been an automatic every-season fixture for Gloucester. We've played them fairly regularly, and enjoyed their Rugby and their company, but they've never been regarded as one of our 'bankers', so to speak. Which, of course, makes them all the more welcome, today.

However, you may remember one highly important meeting between our two Clubs. A few seasons ago — John Orwin was Captain that day, I recall — we travelled to the pleasant Southgate ground to meet Saracens in, what was then, the John Player Cup. We won that one, but not without a fair few alarms and excursions, and if memory serves, it was an opportunist try by Nick Marment, in just about his first season for us, which clinched things.

Another good thing about today is that the occasion enables us to renew acquaintance with one of the game's great characters, Floyd Steadman,

highly experienced and forthright scrum half, who seems to have been around for ever.

Nice to see you again, Floyd. And all the lads. Hope you have a great day, and then go on to beat everyone, except Gloucester, in the remaining League programme.

THANKS TO D.I.S.

We're always grateful to our generous Sponsors, of course, but this time, doubly so. Or, perhaps, 'quintuply' so, because this is the fifth season in a row when one of the arms of Design Installation Services of Cheltenham has so honoured us.

Nowadays, there's almost no need to describe DIS to you. They are, without doubt, the largest building services organisation in Gloucestershire, supplying everything from heating and ventilation systems, to highly sophisticated electronic installations. Anything you need to make a building more serviceable — look no further than DIS.

Managing Director, Ray Bell, has particular cause to be cheerful about that, at the moment. Right now, they're handling all the building services for Cheltenham's new Beechwood Place shopping centre, and it's very nice to be awarded a £2 million contract, literally, just around the corner from your Bath Road head office.

That's not their only major local contract, either. DIS are handling design and contracting for the Stroud and Swindon Building Society's headquarters in Stroud.

Good to be working in your own backyard, of course, but it's worth pointing out that the Group has work going on everywhere from Plymouth to Aberdeen, so they're a genuine national force. The Saracens contingent might like to note that four of those contracts are in London.

Ray Bell is one of Gloucester's most ardent fans. He describes himself as "Gloucester's noisiest supporter", and reckons he heard himself shouting on 'Rugby Special' last Sunday, following his trip to Bristol to watch, what he regards, as a most impressive display.

"We're particularly looking forward to today's game", he says, "Because Gloucester are looking good to win the League, this season, and today's

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

result will certainly have quite a bearing on that."

"I'm also looking forward to our first use of the new Sponsors Lounge", he adds. "We've been here for five years, but this is our first opportunity to use the excellent new facilities."

Coming from the MD of Design Installation Services, who should know about good building, that's quite a compliment.

You're very welcome, Ray, as is everyone who joins you today. And, being a highly important match, we hope all your guests are just as noisy as you are.

LEICESTER NEXT WEEK

Of course, you don't always need a League game to spark interest. Take next Saturday, for example — the day when we play an 'ordinary' game against Leicester.

It's the first Saturday of the Divisional Championship, as a matter of fact, but that will affect the 'Tigers' as much as it does us, and we've had excellent encounters in the past couple of seasons, in similar circumstances. Anyway, you wouldn't want to miss Leicester, would you?

The following Saturday, the Firsts are away to Plymouth — quite tricky that, with a depleted side — but more than adequate compensation is offered by United's home fixture against Glamorgan Wanderers on the same day. Then, on the 16th, we have our traditional pre-Christmas game against Coventry. Quite a nice three weeks.

GANGWAY!

I'd be surprised if there weren't a big crowd here today, so I'd better issue my usual plea to keep gangways and stairs free, if you would be so kind.

GOOD WIN

I wasn't able to get to Bristol last week, myself, but everyone who did seems to hold the opinion that neither the scoreline, nor the TV coverage really did justice to the sheer quality of Gloucester's win. From what I saw on the 'box', that second try, scored by Nick Marment, was an absolute peach.

It's always nice to beat the 'Old Enemy', of course, but when it happens on their own patch, in a game which we really did need to win, it's doubly

gratifying. The result certainly cancelled out that last-gasp win which Bristol had over us, in the League, last season.

THANKS FROM ROY

Many people will be very glad to hear that our old friend Roy Long, excellent servant to Gloucester RFC, in his time, and genial host of one of our locals, 'The White Hart', is home from hospital and doing very nicely, thank you. In case you hadn't heard, he has had a fairly serious operation, which necessitated him going to Frenchay. Anyway, all appears to be well now.

Obviously, he's had a great many enquiries after his well-being, and a whole host of good wishes from a great many people. He'd like me to relay his appreciation and thanks for everyone who thought about him. This I do with the utmost pleasure.

CHRISTMAS GOODIES

This year's Club Poster is now on sale at the Shop, and would make an excellent stocking-filler for the Festive Season. It has the same format as the one which proved so popular, last season — team picture, last season's results, and that sort of thing. Certainly worth getting.

I'm also told that, with a bit of luck, our new Club Year Book will be Ready for sale next Saturday, at the Leicester game. Not quite sure about it, but that's the plan. Again it would make a great pressy for some right-minded friend or relative, it's packed with information and comment, and this year, in our 'Golden Oldies' spot, features a piece about the great Mickey Booth, which will get the memory glands working. Highly recommended.

The players are producing their own publication too, and it shouldn't be all that far away from bursting on a startled world. Haven't seen any proofs, or anything, but from what I hear, it should be highly entertaining. More when I know more.

TAILPIECE

Did you see Peter Jackson's description of Mike Teague, in the 'Daily Mail'. He called him the "Lion of Lions".

Wasn't that one of the titles of the Emperors of Ethiopia? Anyway, I hope someone's issuing Keith Richardson with a whip and a chair.



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TALKING RUGBY

with
Steve Fraser



And then there were three.

The story of the Courage First Division championship is unfolding increasingly like the old Agatha Christie novel "Ten Little Niggers".

The principal characters are getting picked off one by one, often in sensational and unexpected ways. There are now only three survivors and by 4.30 p.m. today they will have been reduced to two at the most or, if today's visitors to Kingsholm have their way, just one

The championship story took some time to take shape but after three weeks we were left with a cast of seven still in with a realistic chance of winning the title.

Unbeaten Bristol were out in front with a group of six teams with two wins from three games still in the picture.

Next league Saturday that group was reduced to six when Rosslyn Park fell victim to the Wasps' sting. Bristol were cut down to size by Bath but left with their hopes still alive.

The axe fell again the following week. Outsiders Saracens were butchered by Leicester while ruthless Harlequins twisted the knife in Bristol. Four left.

Last weekend it was Harlequins turn to suffer when Saracens came back from the grave to claim their most prestigious scalp to date.

That brings us up to the present and today's fateful meetings. Three teams left at the top and none of them with an easy afternoon ahead.

Wasps and Bath fight it out at Sudbury to decide which has the class to stay the course, while Gloucester face up to the London assassins, Saracens.

Last season's Second Division champions have long since ended any doubts about their

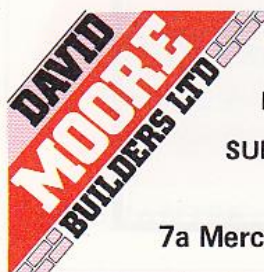
ability to survive at the higher level. Having shot down Harlequins' league campaign, they must now be treated with the utmost respect.

Gloucester have generally come out on top in past encounters but they know one slip could be enough to consign them to the steadily mounting mound of also-rans.

However today's games go, one thing's for sure: there are more shocks in store before we reach the final chapter of this rugby thriller.

COURAGE LEAGUES DIV I

	P	W	F	A	Pts
Wasps.....	6	5	139	46	10
Bath.....	6	5	122	59	10
Gloucester.....	6	5	124	71	10
Leicester.....	6	4	154	86	8
Harlequins.....	6	4	154	86	8
Saracens.....	6	4	100	90	8
Bristol.....	6	3	70	71	6
Orrell.....	6	2	91	68	4
Nottingham.....	6	2	105	83	4
Rosslyn Park.....	6	2	62	127	4
Moseley.....	6	0	53	152	0
Bedford.....	6	0	43	262	0



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