



FOUNDED 1873

# THE GLOUCESTER RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

President: Canon H. M. Hughes BA.

## v COVENTRY

Saturday, December 16th 1989  
Kick-Off 3.00pm

KINDLY SPONSORED BY

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**40p.**

Official Programme

**126**

Lucky Number





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Today's game sponsored by  
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### GLOUCESTER 37

(Cherry & White)

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15. N. Marment

14. D. Morgan

13. R. Mogg

12. S. Davis

11. J. Breeze

10. N. Matthews

9. M. Hannaford

1. A. Windo

2. J. Hawker

3. R. Phillips

4. N. Scrivens

5. J. Brain (Capt.)

6. P. Ashmead

7. I. Smith

8. J. Gadd

Replacements:

J. Bell

P. Mansell

G. Keyse

(I) — International

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### COVENTRY 9

(Blue & White)

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# TOUCH LINES

by

Peter Arnold

## SO CLOSE . . .

Gloucester had all the game, and simply delighted the spectators with the improved form all round, especially in the forwards. The result was a great surprise, previous games having been so close.

So goes a report on a past Gloucester v Coventry game, and you might like to try to guess when it was written. 1987? 1977? 1967? Could well be any of those, but in fact, it comes from the pen of Club Secretary F. W. Lovesey, and it is part of the description he wrote in his official book, referring to the game played on October 2nd, 1897.

Incidentally, Gloucester won 21-0, and took £29.18.9d on the gate. Last season, we won at Coundon road, 30-14, and in between those occasions there has been so much incident, and so many stirring deeds in encounters between our two great Clubs that it would need a pretty hefty hard-cover volume to describe it, even half-way adequately.

For those of us who have been around for any length of time, it seems incredible that Coventry aren't in the First division of the Courage League. I'm quite sure, however, that these things go in cycles, and it won't be long before they regain their right and proper status in the England scene.

That situation does have one positive advantage, however. It means that we can have games against one of our oldest, most respected, and welcome rivals, without any thought of points, League standings, or anything else other than a good game of Rugby Football. Which is all too rare, these days.

Of course, calls made by the Divisional Championship will have weakened both sides — us more than them, I suspect — but I can't say that it worries me a lot. I can never remember watching a dull Coventry game, and I don't suppose we will today.

There's another thing, too. It might be summed up as 'If Coventry comes, can Christmas be far behind?' In fact, you could say that, for seasons now, the game against 'Cov' has been the start of Gloucester RFC's Festive Season. Which makes them all the more welcome.

Hope you enjoy the day appropriately, 'Cov'.  
Ho! Ho! Ho!

## THANKS TO PLUMB CENTER

If you were to read your team sheet and note a (rather odd) Gloucester side which included Malcolm Preedy, Derek Morgan, Jeremy Bennett, Marcus Hannaford, Ian Smith, Peter Jones, Dave Sims, Greg Keyse, Neil Matthews, Tony Windo and Andy Deacon, you wouldn't think you were being short changed by the selectors. If you were then told that the guy who coached all that lot at mini and junior level — at Longlevens, actually — was instrumental in today's Sponsorship, then you'd probably say "Well, good on you mate!" or some similar expression of gratification.

Such, as they used to say in the Victorian romantic novels, is indeed the case. The company concerned is Plumb Center, and the aforementioned character is Bill Beamish, who is well known in Rugby circles, and has been known to don the cherry-and-white strip himself, in his time.

He reckons he's got a good team around him nowadays, too, at Plumb Center's Cole Avenue branch. In case you didn't know, Plumb Centers are a part of Wolseley Centers Limited, who are the largest plumbing and heating merchants' business in the UK. Their Western Region organisation is based at Worcester.

To give you an idea of the size of the operation, Plumb Centers sold 250,000 boilers, 1.6 million radiators, 25 million pipe fittings, 350,000 pairs of taps, 140,000 shower mixers and 10,000 miles of copper pipe last year. And that's at a time when the building industry isn't supposed to be doing so well.

Plumb Center has its 'own label' range of products, covering just about everything from a simple tool to a complete 'flat pack' kitchen or bathroom. In addition, they supply the products of over 100 of the industry's best-known manufacturers. These are sold through a network of branches, currently numbering about 80.

At Worcester, they now have 135,000 square feet of warehousing (which is 35,000 square feet up on last year), and the Western Regional organisation employs some 750 people.

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



I don't think they're *all* coming today — quite. But we obviously welcome Bill Beamish and his cohorts and guests to the distinguished ranks of Kingsholm Sponsors, while thanking them, most sincerely, for their interest and support.

In fact, you could say we're plumb delighted.

#### CHRISTMAS FARE

Christmas is, of course, a time for tradition, and we're very much sticking to ours over the holiday period. For example, next Saturday, the First XV are away to Newport, but you could get out of the last minute shopping by coming along to savour the United, who take on their counterparts from the same fair town.

On Boxing Day we have a visit from Lydney — who else, and on Saturday December 30th, while the Firsts travel to Bridgend, United take on Moseley at Kingsholm.

In fact, it's hardly worth the Birmingham lads' while to go home, really, because on New Year's Day we have the — equally traditional — Gloucester v Moseley First XV fixture.

All as predictable as turkey and stuffing, and none the worse for that. But who gets the turkey, and who gets stuffed — that's another story.

#### PRICES UP

No — not 'Pricey's up', prices are up. On New Year's Day, in fact. If you're not a season ticket holder an OAP, or a Junior, you'll have to pay an extra 50p to get into the ground.

Mind you, at £2.50, we're still not as expensive as most. Terry Tandy tells me that £3.00 through the turnstiles is just about par for the course, these days.

You probably know the reasons. Under the new safety regulations, we've had to buy a lot more first aid equipment, and policing and stewarding are costing quite a lot more, too.

Nobody likes putting prices up, in this way, but we really don't have much choice, just at the moment.

#### BIT OF A 'B'

Nice to see Mike Teague back on the International trail, albeit in the England 'B' side. It will be particularly interesting to see him at No. 8, practicing

his own brand of perestroika against those big Russian forwards.

I was sorry to see Kevin Dunn relegated to the benches for that game, but I've no doubt at all that he'll soon bounce back.

It was also gratifying to see Ian Smith getting a chance to show his paces in the Divisional side. He's deserved the chance to perform in front of selectorial eyes, at representative level for some time, and it couldn't happen to a nicer bloke.

Whatever you think about the Divisional Championship — and everyone knows my feelings on the matter — it is still the launch pad for International careers, in official eyes, anyway. Messrs. Etheridge, Sims and Smith, as relative newcomers, deserve all the luck they can get.

#### CONDIMENTS OF THE SEASONING ...

... or something. I'm asked to relay the festive good wishes and thanks of the various committees and Officials to everyone who has helped and supported through the whole of 1989. In many ways, it has been a good year for the Club, and we hope that everyone gets just as much enjoyment throughout 1990.

#### HANDBOOK

Don't forget to pick up your copy of this season's Hand Book from the Shop. It's excellent value at just one solitary pound, and will give you a lot of entertainment, as well as information. And why not buy a club poster, while you're about it?

#### WELL DONE 'CITY'

Congratulations to our round-ball bretheren for their excellent display in the FA Cup. To have come so desperately close to causing a major upset, and then held Cardiff to a solitary goal in the replay is a very considerable feat indeed. Good for you chaps — and as we at Kingsholm know very well indeed, there's always another season.

#### TAILPIECE

A very Merry and flu-less Christmas from me to all of you. And that includes both Councillor Dave Short, who once called my writings 'rubbish' and John Hiley who, quite recently, used the word 'witterings'.

Ah well! They're probably both right.



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# TALKING RUGBY

with  
Steve Fraser



The South West selectors have caused a few raised eyebrows with their often surprising choice of players this season.

A string of unfamiliar and at times seemingly downright inexplicable names have graced the team sheet.

Two convincing defeats have not helped ease the feeling that somewhere something is badly amiss.

Why, it is asked, is a player of the calibre and experience of John Gadd left out when a relative pup like Dave Sims — currently Gloucester's third choice number eight — is included?

The old excuse for the South West's failure in the championship was that intense inter club rivalry made it impossible to knit the players into a team.

That is no longer the case. All the players say there is a real camaraderie within the squad and a genuine desire to do well.

The answer appears to be that the South West is taking a very long-sighted view of the championship which will in the long term pay huge dividends for South West clubs, the division itself and possibly the national side, but which for the time being has produced a team which was unable to match London or the North and may also struggle against the Midlands this afternoon.

The selectors are not picking on ability alone. They have picked several young players who are certainly not ready for this level but who will come on much quicker because of the experience.

Dave Sims is not the best number eight available to the South West, even allowing for injuries. But he is the best young prospect for his age and his game has improved over just two divisional matches.

The South West's problem is that the other divisions are not showing the same desire to experiment for the future.

London clearly place more emphasis on winning because they fielded a much more experienced side last weekend which included nine England internationals and four B caps.

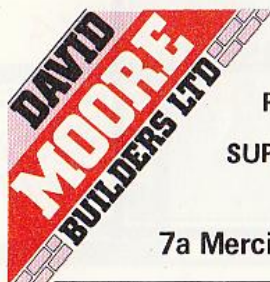
A three-quarter line of Simon Smith, Fran Clough, Will Carling and Everton Davis (Harlequins' England B winger) was hardly a step into the unknown and they proved themselves more than a match for a South West line-up in which captain Simon Halliday was the only old hand.

London's explicit aim before the start of the championship was "to win and to win in style." The South West have set more stock by bleeding youngsters and moulding them into the stars of the future.

If Sims, Richmond's Martin Livesey and Plymouth's Steve Walklin eventually do pull on the England shirt, perhaps recent failures will have been worthwhile.



*Gloucester's John Etheridge... a young lock who has benefitted from meeting better players in divisional rugby*



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