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President: Canon H. M. Hughes BA.

v
LYDNEY

Tuesday, December 26th 1989
Kick-Off 3.00pm

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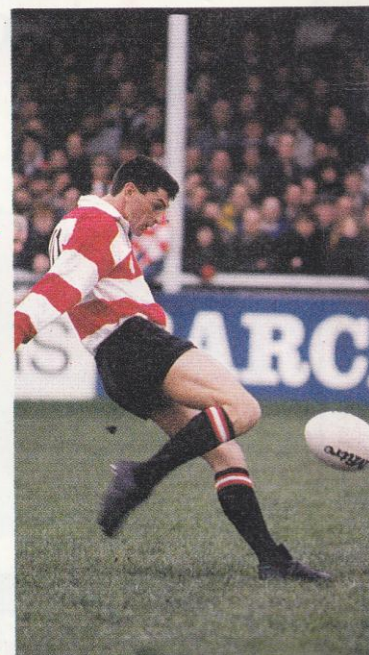
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TOUCH LINES

by
Peter Arnold

BOXING CLEVER

Feeling a little jaded and over-indulged are we? It's a familiar enough syndrome on Boxing Day, and most people have their own particular remedy. Some go for healthy walks — I know one hardy soul who walks over Painswick Beacon, each year — some swear temporary teetotalism, and some merely sigh and reach for the fruit salts. Those of us who are Kingsholm Regulars come along and shout at the Lydney match.

Indeed, this game has become a very fixed tradition, broken in only one year, since its inception, when Old Merchant Tailors, who used to occupy this spot on the fixture list, returned to celebrate their centenary.

I really don't need to say too much about Lydney. Most people here today will have followed the progress of our neighbouring club almost as avidly as they have been scrutinising Gloucester and Berry Hill.

This is something of a special season for today's welcome visitors, however, being the first campaign they have conducted in the upper echelons of the Courage League. They have had mixed fortunes so far, but indications are that they may well survive to fight another day, and that would be a considerable achievement, all things considered.

Holiday games being what they are, it's always difficult to predict the course of a Boxing Day game. Everyone has their own Christmas and New Year commitments, and one sometimes finds some rather odd combinations running out on the field. That, however, simply adds to the fun of the whole thing, and we'll certainly get our share of entertainment today.

It's nice to have the neighbours in for a few drinks at Christmas, and everyone will join me in wishing the Lydney contingent seasonal felicitations.

In other words, have a good time, buddies.

NUDGE, NUDGE, WINK, WINK

I was talking to a Policeman the other day. He pointed out that the usual Christmas drink-drive campaign doesn't disappear with the hot mince pies.

Just a word to the wise.

THANKS TO JUST ABOUT EVERYBODY

As is usual on most Bank Holiday games — New Year's Day excluded — we don't have a sponsor today. Which gives me the opportunity to send seasonal good wishes, and very sincere thanks, to all those companies who help us in various similar ways. For example, Tyre Sales of Kingsholm Road, have been supplying the 'Tantalising Tenners' for our Lucky Programme Winners, ever since they were 'Fortunate Fivers'.

It's a most imaginative way to get some every-week publicity, while doing everybody a bit of good, and we congratulate them on their enterprise.

But there are so many other people to thank, as well. Avonprint help out with our highly popular poster, for example. And there are all those other companies, large and small, multinational and local, who take advertisements in this programme, each season. Neither must I forget everyone who provides an advertising board around the Ground.

It isn't everyone who is entirely happy about this particular aspect of a major Rugby Club's activities, and these commercial aspects do take up a lot of time for a lot of people, who would rather just be watching and talking about the game. They deserve our thanks too.

But we do have to live in the real world, and your season ticket or gate money would be a lot more painful, financially speaking, if our commercial and industrial organisations didn't take an interest.

So, again, thanks to everyone who finds some business money to help in this way, and we hope they find their generosity a useful investment in their workaday activities.

LAST DAY FOR TWO-QUID ENTRANCE

Speaking of gate money, this is the last day when you'll be able to get into the Ground for a mere £2. On New Year's Day the turnstile entrance fee goes up to £2.50.

This has been forced on the Club by the provisions of the new regulations covering Safety at Sport Grounds, which have imposed a lot more expense in little matters like first aid equipment and supplies, and extra stewarding and policing. The sad fact is, that it costs you more to be safer.

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

Obviously, season ticket holders aren't affected — and for the present, neither are Juniors and OAPs.

It's worth pointing out that most first-class grounds are now charging £3.00, so we're still on the right side of the equation.

MOSELEY FOR THE NEW YEAR

On Saturday next, the First XV are away to Bridgend, but on that very same day, as ever was, United take on Moseley here at Kingsholm.

Then, to complete the New Year Double, the senior Moseley side come here for the New Year fixture which has become almost as traditional as Lydney on Boxing Day. See you then.

INTERNATIONAL TICKETS

The Rugby Football Union's Ticket Office, if their time table hasn't come adrift, should be sending out International Ticket applications any day now. So if you've applied for any — hard luck.

That, somewhat cynical, remark is prompted by the fact that there won't be many this year. And the reason for that is that the complete redevelopment of Twickenham's North Stand has turned that end of the ground into a building site for the season, and temporarily reduced capacity by some 10,000. Which means 10,000 fewer tickets.

To give you an idea of the scale of the problem, as far as Gloucester is concerned, Terry Tandy has had a cheque for £13,996.00 returned to him, which accounts for an awful lot of applicants who are going to miss out to some extent or another.

It's a very nasty problem, and I haven't heard, as yet, how it will be resolved. Probably have to wait until we see just how many tickets we do get, I should think.

So, for disappointed applicants — we're sorry. But there's little we can do about it.

EARLY PROGRAMME

I'm writing these notes on Friday, December 15th, which is much farther away from the game in question than I normally like to operate. The reasons for this are twofold. First, Stoaate and Bishop, our Friendly Neighbourhood Printers, who do such a stirring job for us all season long, are as entitled to a Christmas break as any of us, and in common with most people in their demanding trade, take the whole Christmas-New Year period off. So three programmes have to be written, almost simultaneously. Second, and just to make matters

even more difficult, Stoaate and Bishop are in the throes of a comprehensive house-moving operation, which affects everyone, in all their premises, here and in Cheltenham. They have therefore been working under considerable pressure.

Our thanks, therefore, for providing your literature with their usual efficiency, even though circumstances have conspired against them.

HANDBOOK

And talking about literature, don't forget that our nice, new handbook is now on sale for a measely quid apiece. Quite extraordinarily good value for money, and required reading for anyone who supports Gloucester regularly, sometimes, occasionally, or almost never.

TAILPIECE

As I say, I'm writing this on the day before the Coventry match, and the weekend weather forecast is horrendous, to say the least. I have to assume, however that the match will take place.

If it did, you'll probably have noticed that I was able to refer to the Gloucester-Coventry game played in 1897, and you might be interested in how I came by the information.

My thanks to George Lane, of the City Council Parks Department, who has lent me the Secretary's Book for the season 1897/8 — and fascinating reading it makes too.

The book is the property of his wife, who is a descendant of the Secretary in question. His name was F. W. Lovesy — known, I'm told, as 'Fred' — who writes his address as simply, 'The Cross, Gloucester', which is interesting.

I note that, in 1897, Boxing Day fell on a Sunday, so the traditional game was played on Monday, December 27th. The Opposition? Old Merchant Tailors — who else?

Remember, OMT's were a decided power in the land, in those days, and could field one or two internationals. According to Fred Lovesey, they brought their full side, and were faced by a Gloucester team which was only one short of full strength, a Mr. Hall being "on the sick list".

Nevertheless, Gloucester won 21-0, and Fred describes the activity thus:

"A grand game, the backs playing their best game of the season. Good combination all round. Forwards very even."

No doubt they were deep and crisp, too. Hope you're having a splendid holiday, and you enjoy the rest of it as much as I intend to.



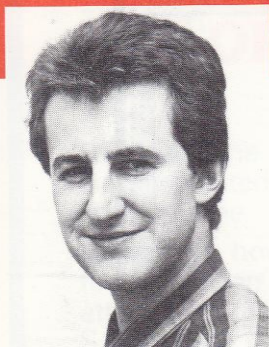
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TALKING RUGBY

with

Steve Fraser



It was good to see Mike Teague's name in the England squad for training in Portugal next year, despite his lack of match fitness.

Anyone who saw him in the divisional championship games could tell he was not 100 per cent after the long lay-off through injury.

In fact, there was a real danger that by playing he may have done his cause more harm than good - especially when in the London match he came up against his closest rival for the England blindside spot, Mickey Skinner.

The national press billed it as a straight head to head confrontation but the big Gloucester man was at a disadvantage from the start.

The nagging shoulder injury which developed in Australia with the British Lions and broke down completely in South Africa in the World XV's First Test ensured he had played just 120 minutes of rugby since the summer at the start of the championship and none at all at first team level.

It was absurd to treat his third full match of the season as a fight for his England place, a fact the selectors have acknowledged by keeping him in the squad.

Interestingly, Teague was picked at number eight for England B against the Soviets on Saturday. With Leicester's Dean Richards out for the season and Skinner back on form, Teague may well be asked to fill the number eight slot for the Five Nations Championship.

One of the saddest features of the championship was the fact that injury again prevented prop Malcolm Preedy from proving his worth. Preedy is playing as well as he ever has and deserved at least the opportunity to show himself worthy of a re-call.

On the plus side, the championship provided another valuable opportunity for two of Gloucester's up and coming prospects to pit themselves against the men they will need to master if they are to oust them from the national side.

John Etheridge by all accounts came out of his clash with British Lion Wade Dooley with the

upper hand — about 60-40 in favour of Etheridge. No mean feat considering the difficulties the Australians had coping with the big copper.

He found it tougher against the very impressive Paul Ackford in the London match but it is all useful experience.

Hooker Kevin Dunn, currently rated number three in England, lost his chance to tackle Brian Moore — probably the best in Britain — when Moore dropped out of the Midlands side with an injury. But Dunn acquitted himself well against England number two John Olver and took one against the head.

Finally, the championship gave a young man named Dave Sims his first taste of top level rugby. It will be several seasons before Sims is ready to challenge for an England place but his progress has been speeded up considerably by his three divisional games.



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