

**GLOUCESTER
RUGBY
FOOTBALL
CLUB**

**1989-1990
HANDBOOK**



GLOUCESTER RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

FOUNDED IN 1873

The 1989-90 Official Handbook

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Captain 1st XV: M. Hamlin

Captain United XV: D. Spencer

Coach: K. Richardson

“It’s all very encouraging”

Canon Mervyn Hughes, President, Gloucester RFC

There can seldom have been a time when all of us who owe allegiance to Gloucester RFC have had as much to be cheerful about. Last season’s record must surely establish us as one of the two best sides in England, there is a wealth of talent among the players, right down to Colts level, and developments at Kingsholm will soon ensure that we have one of the best grounds in the country.

Several players have received representative honours, since last year’s Year Book was published, culminating in Mike Teague’s magnificent display for the British Lions in Australia, and several others may well be on the threshold of such recognition.

It’s all very encouraging, but such success doesn’t come easily, or without the devoted hard work of many people. Many of them you know well; the Club Coach and his excellent team, for example, but so many helpers give their time and effort without seeking any recognition. Week in, week out, kit has to be washed, turnstiles manned, the scoreboard kept ticking over and many other duties performed which are not immediately obvious to the casual observer.

At Gloucester, we have always been extremely fortunate in being able to call upon the services of a large band of voluntary helpers, and if someone finds he (or she) can’t continue, for one reason or another, someone else has always stepped forward to fill the gap.

Quite simply, I believe Gloucester RFC to be the best Club in the game, and the hard work of so many people, in their respective spheres, contributes immeasurably towards that happy position.

On behalf of everyone — players, Officials, supporters and visitors — let me thank, most sincerely, all those people who participate.

And let’s go on to even greater things.

“Very satisfactory”

Peter Ford, Chairman, Gloucester RFC

The 1989/9 season proved to be a very satisfactory one, with excellent wins against Bath and Leicester, among others. The first XV finished as Runners-up in the Courage Clubs Championship, and Semi-Finalists in the Pilkington Cup. We mustn't forget, either, that both the United and the Colts, upon whom we depend for our future playing strength, also had very good seasons.

Mike Hamlin, John Etheridge, Kevin Dunn, Ian Smith and Richard Pascall all played for the England 'B' side, which shows we have strength in depth.

And what a season for Mike Teague! After his highly successful, and well-deserved recall to the England team, he joined the British Lions' tour of Australia, proved to be the team's outstanding player, and was named 'Man of the Series' for his performances in the Test Matches.

Mike Hamlin takes over from Marcus Hannaford as Club Captain this season. We must thank Marcus for his efforts as skipper, which led us to the excellent results we had last year, and wish Mike the very best of luck in his quest to do even better.

Dave Spencer deserves our thanks too. He proved a very fine leader of the United, last season, and we're delighted that he has agreed to carry on in that very important capacity.

Keith Richardson, and his happy band of helpers, have proved to be a highly effective coaching team. It's good to see that Keith's talents have been recognised to the extent that he has now been given the responsibility for coaching the South West Divisional side this season, and we're sure he will be equally successful in that sphere.

But now to other matters. Development at the ground continues, and we hope to have the new Hospitality Boxes with standing accommodation below, completed by the end of this season. When the work is completed, we shall have a capacity of around 15,000, and facilities among the very best in the country. This factor certainly had a bearing on the excellent news that we are to stage one of the matches in the World Cup, featuring the 'All Blacks' no less. That will be in 1991, which by happy coincidence, is the year in which we celebrate 100 years of Rugby at Kingsholm, and you'll be hearing much more about that, as time goes on.

I must also add my thanks to those of our President for all the help which is provided by so many people, in so many different ways. It is also only right to thank the Referees Society for providing officials at all matches, and the 'Citizen', Severn Sound and Radio Gloucestershire, who have covered all our matches admirably, and do a great deal to promote rugby football.

Finally, may I wish all our loyal supporters — the best in English Rugby — a most happy and enjoyable season.



“It’s a long way from All Blues 2nds against Spartans!”

It was too. Mike Teague’s answer to a query from Nigel Starmer Smith, following the Lions Test triumph in Australia, has now passed into folklore, and indeed, you’d have to know a fair amount about both local Rugby, and Mike Teague himself, to appreciate it.

Even more revealing was the comment which followed it. In reply to a sally about ‘Kingsholm grit’, Mike implied that he had to do well in Australia or he’d never dare to show his face in the Players’ Bar again.

Perhaps that overstated it a bit, but the fact remains that we didn’t just hope, or even expect, that, given the chance, he’d make a big impact — we *knew* he would.

That interview took place before the announcement that ‘Teaguey’ had been named ‘Man of the Series’, even though injury restricted his appearances to two games. The accolade was certainly the greatest honour to befall a Gloucester RFC man since the late Tom Voyce was made President of the RFU, and probably the greatest playing honour ever. It came as something of a surprise to learn that, pre-Teague, only two players — Don Rutherford, and Tommy Voyce himself — had ever represented the British Isles at Test level, and for the 1989 vintage to be considered to be the best of them exceeded even our cherry-and-white-eyed expectations.

And don’t forget — Mike was playing out of position. It was by no means the first time that the Powers That Be had asked him to play at No. 6, but on the other occasions, he had seemed a little lost, not the assured, electric player to whom the Kingsholm Mafia had grown accustomed at No.8.

This time, however, he had put that uncertainty behind him. The best part of a season playing for England in his new role, with differences in training and coaching, had worked a transformation.

It has to be admitted that Mike’s road to the ranks of the Great and Good has not been a simple one. In fact, his career has been chequered. The ill-starred defection to Cardiff, dalliances with Stroud, to say nothing of his rejection of the Divisional side probably deprived him of the ultimate honours for longer than was necessary. No doubt, every decision seemed to be right at the time; hindsight is an exact science! But the really great man is the one who bounces back from adversity, and Mike Teague has certainly done that.

For those with eyes to see, the quality of the player has been obvious for some time. Murray Mexted, the great All Black No.8, went on record as

saying that Mike Teague was the best opposite number he'd met on the 1985 New Zealand tour.

On another occasion, when the selectors picked six Gloucester forwards to test the intended England pack during a Trial, Mike dissected the current England No.8, John Scott, with clinical precision. In both cases, Teague was giving away several inches in height, but it didn't stop him winning far more than his share of the ball at the tail of the line.

One of the secrets of Mike's success has surely been the sheer level of competition he's had to see off to keep his place at Kingsholm. When he returned from Cardiff, for example, there was a strong school of thought that his replacement, Jeremy Bennett, should retain his place, and the No.6 spot was effectively barred to him by his old friend and drinking partner, John Gadd.

Gloucester has always been a phenomenal breeding ground for back-row men. When John Gwilliam was Captain of Wales, he was forced to play in the second row for Gloucester by the late Bob Hodge — and he was playing with Charlie Dunn and Dennis Ibbotson!

Since then, we've never been short. Mike Potter, John Haines, Dick Smith, Paul Wood, the underestimated Mike Longstaff and the great John Watkins ... no doubt you can think of others.

Indeed, the competition for 'Teaguey' is still as strong as ever it was, whether he is to be regarded as a blindside or a No.8. Just think of the possible combinations presently at the Club's disposal: Messrs. Clarke, Ashmead, Stanley, Sims, not to mention the incredible John Gadd, would probably walk into just about any club back-row in the country. And there are colts like Greg Keyse waiting impatiently in the wings.

Knowing Mike, he won't expect his place as of right. It wouldn't be the first time he has had to work his way through the United side before regaining First XV status, but just as long as that nasty shoulder injury, sustained in Australia, has been resolved, there doesn't seem any reason why he shouldn't resume a distinguished International career.

He'll probably be needed too. The Fijians scored a couple of tries against England which would have been snuffed out by a full-strength back row, and the 'B' side's performance against the same opposition didn't reveal any outstanding pretender to the throne.

One thing you can never do is write him off. He's rebounded from adversity too many times for that, and his undoubted wizardry, supported and refined by the fiercest clubmate competition in English Rugby will stand him in good stead.

'Teaguey' — you've done us proud.



'Hambo': A profile of the Club Captain, Mike Hamlin

Years ago, one Wednesday evening, Cheltenham arrived at Kingsholm with a young outside half. The game went the way that Cheltenham matches usually do, and quite frankly, we weren't all that impressed; 'M. Hamlin' was slightly built and seemed a bit out of his depth. His boot looked as if it might be useful, given time, but that was about all.

The rest, as they say, is history. Mike Hamlin switched his allegiance to Gloucester, and now has a whole clutch of honours under his belt, including a place in the England 'B' side, Divisional honours, and some full England squad training. He is also Gloucester RFC's Club Captain, a challenge which most aspiring Rugby players would relish the chance of meeting.

That boot of his has certainly proved to be a gem. His line kicking has crucified many an embattled pack, and he's a better place kicker than he thinks he is.

It always used to be said that if 'Hambo' got his first kick in well, he'd go on doing it throughout the whole game. Those days are largely behind him now and there is no doubt that, among many highly experienced and qualified judges — including some at National level — he is regarded as one of the most accomplished outside-halves in the game.

His abilities with the ball in his hand are often underestimated; although he doesn't make as many breaks as some of us would like, when he does decide to have a go, he can be electrifying.

One game exemplifies this perfectly. In the days when Leicester were undoubtedly the top side in the country, they came to Kingsholm to find that a crop of last-minute illnesses and injuries had initiated a re-shuffle of the Gloucester back division. Tim Smith found himself on the wing, Mike Evans at outside-half, and Mike Hamlin dropped back to the unaccustomed position of centre.

Mike played a handling game, that day. He scored one 'beaut' of a try, cutting through the formidable Leicester defence like a cheesewire; those

extra few yards of space had worked wonders for him. Gloucester won handily, in spite of the injury problems, and the undoubted quality of the opposition.

No club ever had a more loyal, hard-working player, or more likeable chap than Mike Hamlin. The announcement that he was to follow Marcus Hannaford — with whom as half-back partner, Mike has an excellent understanding, on and off the field — as Captain was greeted with pleasure by the vast majority of people.

But would pleasant, likeable, Mike Hamlin meet the challenges posed by today's increasingly competitive game?

Looking back, another Leicester game would seem to provide the answer. A couple of seasons ago, Gloucester had an away fixture against the "Tigers" — one which would have a crucial bearing on the forthcoming League structure.

Mike skippered the side that day, and a cracker of a game it proved to be. Apart from anything else, it was played in a snowstorm, which didn't exactly help matters.

Conditions for kicking were appalling, and Tim Smith hadn't had a good day with the boot. Knowing that it could well be the last kick of the match, and that much more than just the game depended on it, Mike decided to take the responsibility himself, and sank it, with all the aplomb in the world.

That showed captaincy qualities of a high order. He'd taken the burden and in those circumstances, showed a confidence in his own abilities, which some people might not have thought he could exhibit.

Already this season, Mike has lived up to the confidence placed in him. His play doesn't seem to have suffered, and we can all think of excellent players who have had problems in that direction, when faced with the burdens of captaincy.

It couldn't happen to a nicer fellow. Everyone hopes he makes a thundering success of his season, and there seems no reason in the world why he shouldn't.

A New Job for Mike

Legendary Captain and hooker, Mike Nicholls, has now taken over one of the most important jobs in the Club — that of Fixture Secretary, complicated, these days, by the advent of the League, among other things.

He succeeds the long-serving holder of the post, Chairman Peter Ford. "Pete's going to be a very hard act to follow", says 'Nick', "But I can only do my best."

And as anyone who ever saw him in action knows, Mike Nicholls' best is very good indeed.

So you think you know your Gloucester?

The quiz in last year's Yearbook proved extremely popular, so it's rather a case of 'now follow that'. Nevertheless, we'll have a go. Answers on page 32.

- 1 What do the following pairs of Gloucester players and opponents have in common?
 - (a) John Fidler and Paul Ackford
 - (b) Graham Parker and Alistair Hignall
 - (c) Mike Hamlin and Nigel Starmer Smith
- 2 Which Gloucester player appeared at outside half in a County Final, and went on to tour South Africa with England?
- 3 What was the Kingsholm Ground called in the days before Gloucester took it over?
- 4 When Gloucester shared the John Player Cup with Moseley, who had they beaten in the Semi-Final?
- 5 That was in 1982. In which year did Gloucester last win the Cup outright?
- 6 Before Mike Teague, Tom Voyce and Don Rutherford were the only Gloucester players to have appeared in Tests for the British Lions. However, *five* players, apart from them, have toured with the Lions while playing for Gloucester. Can you name them?
- 7 Which Gloucester player captained Gloucestershire in a County Final twice in the same season?
- 8 Gloucester don't play all their games at Kingsholm, of course. If the team coach were travelling to the following grounds, which clubs would be providing the opposition?
 - (a) Goldington Road
 - (b) Aylestone Road
 - (c) Ireland Avenue
- 9 Can you add the common surname to each of the following pairs of players?
 - (a) Kevin and Charlie
 - (b) Ronnie and John
 - (c) Gordon and Peter
- 10 On which date in the year might you have seen T. F. Huskisson playing against Gloucester?

Player Profiles

A catalogue of current Gloucester R.F.C. players



MIKE HAMLIN

Mike Hamlin — aged 30; height 5 ft 11 ins; weight 12 stones; fly-half. Takes over from Marcus Hannaford as Club Captain. Previously with Coney Hill and Cheltenham, Mike capped a vintage year with selection for the England B team to tour Spain, playing against a Basque Select and Spain. Now approaching 250 first team matches, Mike has also represented Gloucestershire Colts, Gloucestershire and the South West. He is a construction worker.

MARCUS HANNAFORD

Marcus Hannaford — aged 26; height 6 ft; weight 13½ stones; scrum half. Last season's club captain who has made 150 appearances for Gloucester. Formerly with Old Cryptians, Marcus is an England Colts trialist who has come close to further representative honours. Comes from the Hannaford family which also produced former England and Bristol Number 8 Charlie. Marcus runs his own fencing business.



ANDREW STANLEY

Andrew Stanley — aged 26; height 6 ft; weight 13 stones 11lbs; flanker. Joined Gloucester from Gordon League four seasons ago. Played for South West colts and had an England colts trial. With 30 first team appearances under his belt, 'Stan' has looked extremely sharp in pre-season training and trials. He is a lecturer at GlosCAT.

NIGEL SCRIVENS

Nigel Scrivens — aged 31; height 6 ft 4 ins; weight 17½ stones; lock. 'Scrivs' is nearing 150 first team appearances for Gloucester. Formerly with Cirencester, this season will be his eighth with the club. He has worked hard to establish his now regular first team spot.



JIM BREEZE

Jim Breeze — aged 30; height 5 ft 11 ins; weight 13 st 12 lbs; winger. Nearing 150 appearances for the first team, scoring 80 tries, Jim had previously played for Gloucester All Blues and Stroud. He has represented Gloucestershire and the South West as a colt and works as a fitter.

DAMIAN CUMMINS

Damian Cummins — aged 24; height 5ft 11 ins; weight 13 stones 2lbs; centre. Saintbridge School teacher Cummins broke through two seasons ago to form a useful partnership with Ruari Maclean. With Maclean now departed, he will be looking to form another partnership in the centre. Previously played for London Welsh and Exeter University.

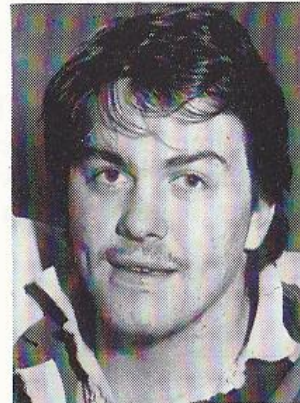


JOHN ETHERIDGE

John Etheridge — aged 24; height 6 ft 6 ins; weight 17 stones; lock. The former Gloucester All Blues and Old Richians player has made excellent progress over the last two seasons, earning England 'B' selection last season. 'Too Tall' is now approaching 100 appearances for the club. Works as a Building Surveyor.

PETE JONES

Pete Jones — aged 26; height 5 ft 11 ins; weight 15 stones 9 lbs; prop. 'Jonah' has made over 70 first team appearances, has been a member of the South West squad and has also had an England under 23 trial. Having 'summered' in Australia — playing for Waratah RFC — he considers himself fitter than ever. Works for the Severn Trent Water Authority.

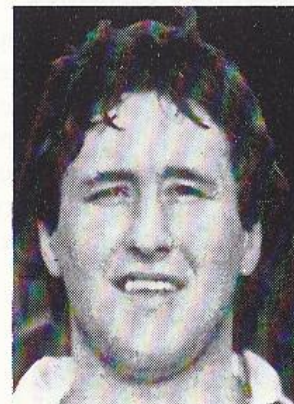


MALCOLM PREEDY

Malcolm Preedy — aged 27; height 5 ft 11 ins; weight 15 stones; prop. An England international who has also represented Gloucestershire, the South West, Barbarians and Auckland 'B'. A former club captain, Malcolm has played over 260 games for the Cherry and Whites. Is a maintenance fitter by trade.

MIKE TEAGUE

Mike Teague — aged 28; height 6 ft 2 ins; weight 14 stones; number eight. England international who starred for the British Lions in their Test series victory over Australia, winning the 'Man of the Series' award. Recently toured South Africa with the International World XV. Mike, who has also played for Cardiff and the Barbarians, has made over 270 appearances for Gloucester, scoring over 60 tries. Runs a building firm with his brother-in-law.



GREG KEYSE

Greg Keyse — aged 19; height 6 ft 4 ins; weight 15 stones; number eight. Now in his second season with the club after joining from Longlevens, Greg has looked impressive in the few first team games in which he has played. A former Gloucestershire colts player with tremendous potential. Works as a plumber.

RICHARD MOGG

Richard Mogg — aged 33; height 6 ft; weight 13 stones 4 lbs; winger/centre. 15 years at Kingsholm make him the club's longest serving current player. 'Moggy' has now turned out more than 450 times for Gloucester which puts him in the top six in the club's history. Joining from Tredworth, he went on to represent the South West, England U19, England B and the Barbarians. Has now passed the magnificent total of 150 tries for the club!

**TIM SMITH**

Tim Smith — aged 27; height 5 ft 11 ins; weight 13 stones 4 lbs; full-back. Formerly with Gordon League, Brockworth and Widden Old Boys. Has represented Gloucestershire Colts and England Students. Scored over 300 points last season and stands fourth on Gloucester's list of points scorers with 1,400 points amassed in around 180 appearances. Spent the summer playing in Australia for Waratah RFC.

NICK MARMENT

Nick Marment — aged 29; height 6 ft 1 in; weight 13 stones 10 lbs; full-back. 'Marmite' was born in Bristol and played for Dings Crusaders and Saracens before joining Gloucester four seasons ago after having been appointed a master at the King's School in Gloucester. Has played 60 first team games.

**JOHN ROBERTS**

John Roberts — aged 24; height 5 ft 7 ins; weight 10½ stones; fly-half. A school teacher at St Edwards in Cheltenham who has represented British Colleges. Now in his fourth season at Kingsholm, John has proved a more than useful understudy to Mike Hamlin.

JOHN BRAIN

John Brain — aged 28; height 6 ft 4 ins; weight 16½ stones; lock. John has been at Kingsholm for eleven years after switching from Gloucester Old Boys. Has represented the South West, England under 23's and English Students and played over 200 games for Gloucester. Works as a Trading Standards Officer.

**LLOYD GARDNER**

Lloyd Gardner — aged 26; height 5 ft 10 ins; weight 11½ stones; scrum-half. Formerly with Spartans, Lydney and Stroud, Lloyd has proved a consistent try scorer when called up to first team duties. A tenacious player who works for Severn Trent.

DAVE SPENCER

Dave Spencer — aged 31; height 6 ft 2 ins; weight 15½ stones; back-row forward. Captain of the 'United' XV, 'Spanner' was formerly with Stroud, Widden Old Boys and Cainscross and has played 100 games for the Gloucester first team. Has been a South West squad member and played for Public School Wanderers.

**DERRICK MORGAN**

Derrick Morgan — aged 28; height 5 ft 10 ins; weight 12½ stones; winger. Joined Gloucester after coming through the junior ranks at Longlevens. Played for Gloucester Colts and is now making a comeback after being ruled out with a back injury for most of last season. Has made more than 150 appearances for the club, scoring more than 100 tries.

NICK PRICE

Nick Price — aged 32; height 5 ft 11 ins; weight 14 stones 2 lbs; winger. Formerly with Old Cryptians, Nick joined Gloucester in 1981-82 and is nearing 200 appearances for the first XV. Leading try scorer last season with 17. Has represented Gloucestershire and runs a life and pensions brokerage.

**DAVE SIMS**

Dave Sims — aged 19; height 6 ft 6 ins; weight 16 stones; lock. Will be in his second season with Gloucester. Previously with Longlevens, Dave is a player with considerable potential, having represented the Gloucestershire, South West and England colts. Having 'summered' in Brisbane, Australia, he has already played for the Southwest Division this season.

CHRIS DEE

Chris Dee — aged 22; height 6 ft; weight 12½ stones; winger. Previously with Coney Hill, Chris has represented Gloucestershire colts playing at Twickenham in the 1987/88 County Colts Final against Yorkshire. As yet only a handful of first team games to his name.

**PAUL ASHMEAD**

Paul Ashmead — aged 23; height 6 ft 2 ins; weight 14½ stones; back-row forward. In his fourth season at Kingsholm after joining Gloucester from Coney Hill, Paul has made over 40 first team appearances and is now challenging for a regular 1st XV spot. Works as a refrigeration engineer.

Gloucester Rugby Football Club 1988-89 Season



Back Row: A. Mitchell, M. Elway, A. C. Pope, B. Howells, T. Close, A. Townsend, R. W. Collins (Colts Secretary), E. J. Stephens, P. Hawker, R. Rolleston (Physio), F. C. Reed (Team Secretary),
K. Richardson (Coach), M. H. Booth, J. Fidler.
Middle Row: R. Redwood, S. T. Day (Vice President), T. R. Tandy (General Secretary), N. Price, R. Phillips, B. Clarke, J. Brain, J. Etheridge, N. Scrivens, M. Teague, J. Gadd, A. Stanley,
T. Smith, R. Morris (Vice President), B. Glanville (Linesman).
Front Row: K. Dunn, D. Cummins, I. Smith, M. Preedy, J. Jarrett, M. Hannaford (Captain), Canon M. Hughes (President), P. Ashmead, R. Mogg, J. Breeze, N. Marmont.
Ground Row: L. Gardiner, M. Hamlin.

TONY WINDO

Tony Windo — aged 20; height 6 ft; weight 16½ stones; prop. A former captain of Gloucester colts who was also a member of the Divisional colts squad. Previously with Spartans, Tony can look forward to a promising career in the first class game. Currently works as a postman.

**CRAIG GUEST**

Craig Guest — aged 26; height 6 ft 3 ins; weight 17½ stones; lock-forward. Former St Mary's Hospital player, Craig missed out of last season through injury and work commitments. A doctor, who has made some 20 first team appearances, he will be hoping to add to this tally this season.

NEIL MATTHEWS

Neil Matthews — aged 19; height 5ft 11 ins; weight 12 stones; fly-half. A product of Longlevens and Gloucester colts, a talented youngster who is an England colts international and current member of the England under 21 squad. Works for John Fidler Construction.

**PAUL TAYLOR**

Paul Taylor — aged 33; height 6ft 1 in; 13½ stones; centre. The former Widden Old Boys player has recently returned to the club after a year working in Mozambique to challenge for his first team spot. Has now passed the '300' appearance target that he set himself.

JOHN GADD

John Gadd — aged 28; height 6 ft 2 ins; weight 14½ stones; flanker. John is nearing 250 appearances for Gloucester, having scored more than 40 tries. Formerly with Gloucester Old Boys, he has represented Gloucestershire, the South West and England XV's twice, against Canada and Fiji. Rated by Mike Teague as the best blindside flanker in the country, he is very unfortunate not to have won a full cap.

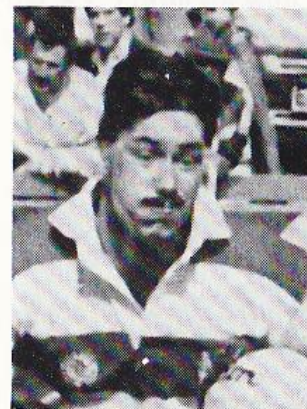


RICHARD PASCALL

Richard Pascall — aged 31; height 6 ft 2 ins; weight 17 stones; prop. 'Pasc' played for Kent at the age of 18. Previously with Bedford, he has developed into a powerful prop and gained England 'B' honours last season. Has now made more than 200 appearances for the Cherry and Whites and has also represented English and British Colleges, English Students, London and the South West. A Products Manager with Chelsea Building Society.

IAN SMITH

Ian Smith — aged 26; height 6 ft; weight 13 stones 10 lbs; flanker. Established in the Gloucester back row alongside Teague and Gadd, he has caught the eye of the England selectors and represented the national 'B' side. Has also played for Gloucestershire colts, the South West and has been an England Under 23 trialist, Ian, who has played more than 150 times for the first team, is a Civil Engineer.



KEVIN DUNN

Kevin Dunn — aged 24; height 5 ft 9 ins; weight 13½ stones; hooker. The former Spartans and Lydney player, who played for Waratah (Australia) in the summer, has made remarkable progress since joining Gloucester. He has yet to play his 100th game for the club but has already played for the South West and England 'B' and is highly rated by the international selectors.

**BARRY CLARK**

Barry Clark — aged 26; height 6 ft 2 ins; weight 15 stones 5 lbs; number eight. A farmer at Stow-in-the-Wold, Clark, who made a big impact when he first came to Gloucester from his local club, has proved a more than capable deputy for Mike Teague at number eight with over 30 first team appearances.

BOB PHILLIPS

Bob Phillips — aged 30; height 5 ft 11 ins; weight 16 stones; prop. 'Dino', a former Tredworth player, has been at Kingsholm for eight seasons and played over 100 games for the first XV. Works for the Severn Trent Water Authority.

**JOHN HAWKER**

John Hawker — aged 25; height 5 ft 10 ins; weight 13 stones 9 lbs; hooker. Having joined the Club in 1988, and following the departure of Glyn Mann to Bristol, John has already established himself as the No.2 player in this position with over 20 appearances. Formerly with Brockworth and Matson, he is a Computer Operator with Barclays Bank.

PAUL MANSELL

Paul Mansell — aged 31; height 6 ft; weight 12 stones 6 lbs; Full back. Married, Paul has been part of Gloucester's rugby scene for many years, often starring for his local club, Coney Hill. He is a very useful place kicker and is considered by many to be the 'most natural kicker off either foot' that the club has seen.

New Arrivals

DON CASKIE

Don Caskie — aged 23; height 5 ft 6 ins; 11½ stones; Centre. Like the 'prodigal son', Don joined the Club this season from London Scottish having originally been born and raised in Dursley. Having also previously played for Dursley and Brisol, 'Ferret' has already made one of the First XV centre positions his own.

SHAUN BRYAN

Shaun Bryan — aged 21; height 6 ft 5 ins; weight 16½ stones; Second row. Having 'guested' for the United last season, Shaun is now commanding a regular place in that side and has appeared on several occasions for the First XV. Formerly with the All Blues and Gloucester Old Boys clubs, he works as a fitter.

GARETH RICHARDS

Gareth Richards — aged 22; height 5ft 10 ins; weight 12½ stones. Scrumhalf. Having had an excellent series of Trials, Gareth joined the Club this season and has already proved to be an asset. Serving in the Army as a Royal Marine, he is a rarity in the fact that he has joined us from the Malvern Club; we know of no other?



‘Boothey’ talks to Peter Arnold

Sometime in the mid-1950's, a small, stocky pupil of Sir Thomas Rich's School made the trek to Twickenham for the England v. Wales schoolboy match. Not just as a spectator, though: *he* had the distinction of having been selected as Travelling Reserve.

Years later, when the great Dicky Jeeps finally retired, no one doubted that either he, or Coventry's prolific George Cole would fill his boots as the England scrum half. No one, that is, except the Selectors, who picked a whole series of lesser men for the job, and lived to regret it.

No hard feelings, though. Our Old Richian, now not so small, but just as stocky, is one of England's seven-man management team. Not so bad for a lad who, on November 10th 1956, thought himself the proudest young player in the world, when he pulled on the cherry-and-white strip for the first time, for United against Bristol Aircraft Company.

The formidable scrum half in question is, of course, Michael Booth, known more familiarly as ‘Mickey’, ‘Mick’ or (from the terraces) ‘Boothey’. Many long-time supporters regard him as Gloucester's best-ever all-round scrum half — strong, uncompromising, elusive, and with as shrewd a tactical brain as ever generalised a game at Kingsholm.

It didn't take Mickey long to make his mark at Gloucester. A Stalwart of Spartans and Founder Member of Longlevens he had arrived with considerable experience, and obvious potential. Just three weeks after that United debut, he played his first game for the First XV — away to Oxford University, when they were a decided power in the land.

Some idea of the strength of those two sides can be gathered from the fact that, quite apart from the young M. Booth, Gloucester included Peter Ford, Dennis Ibbotson and George Hastings, while John Currie (now Chairman of Harlequins), D. O. Brace and the late and much-missed P. D. G. Robbins, all wore the dark-blue strip.

Between that time and his retirement, immediately after the victorious Cup Final of 1972, Mickey played 471 games for Gloucester, 42 for Gloucestershire, when the County Championship really meant something, had one full England Trial, and travelled to four or five more.

“And I lost a couple of seasons, doing my National Service”, he says “Although I was based at Innsworth, the Selectors obviously wanted a settled side, and my regular attendance couldn't be guaranteed.”

Mick's being a bit modest here. In fact, he played around 50 first-class games over that period, many times with "one of the best players I've ever turned out with — the great Alex Murphy". It's worth pointing out that Rugby League players in the Armed Forces were allowed to play the Union code. Hence Mickey's involvement with one of the greatest League stars of all time.

He became a regular for the Combined Services side, and toured Kenya with them for five weeks in 1962. That was his first overseas trip as a Rugby player. Since then, the game has taken him to 12 countries, the most recent being a trip to Rumania, last Spring.

Mickey Booth has never been afraid of stating his opinions, and is quite happy to share his views on other players and personalities. "When I was a schoolboy," he reminisces, "the players I most liked to watch were Charlie Dunn, Willie Jones, Ken Daniel, and, of course, fellow scrum-half Danny Evans."

"The greatest *person* I ever met through Rugby was Tommy Voyce. He did me the great honour of leaving me one of his shares in the Club in his Will, and it's my most treasured possession."

You can't play as many games as Mickey has at a very high level, without playing with and against a good many great players. He considers that the best Gloucester players he ever appeared with were Don Rutherford, Bill Patterson, Terry Hopson and Dick Smith. "If you asked me about the best I ever played with from anywhere, I'd have to add John Blake and Richard Sharp," he says.

"The greatest I ever played *against*, were Dickie Jeeps, Cliff Morgan, Gareth Edwards and Barry John."

"I've been lucky in getting to know some of the game's greatest characters — there don't seem to be so many about, these days — and among the greatest of them all are Ray Prosser, Peter Parfitt, Roy Fowke, Mike Burton and 'Digger' Morris."

"My greatest mate from the opposition is George Cole of Coventry", and those of us who can remember the titanic struggles those two had at both Club and County level, will have a wry smile at that comment."

"The best game I every played in? That would have to be Gloucester v. Bristol at the Memorial Ground in that 1972 Cup Season. On the other hand, the Western Counties against the All Blacks in 1963 was a cracking game. We were the only side on the whole tour to score two tries against them."

Mickey considers that the finest referee he ever played under was Gwyn Walters, but he has a good story about another one. Apparently, during the County Semi-Final against Durham in 1959, M. Booth went down and was kicked in the mouth, losing three teeth in the process. The first thing he knew was a hand on his shoulder, pulling him upright, and a cultured voice saying, "You're all right to carry on, aren't you old boy. Yes. Of course you are!" Mickey continued and Gloucestershire won.

The owner of the voice was the referee, from the Hampshire Society. One Dennis Thatcher, now famous in quite another sphere. "He wasn't a bad ref." says Mickey.

To complete his 'bests', Mickey volunteers that his favourite Rugby journalist, these days, is John Mason of the 'Daily Telegraph' whom he has known ever since he was a junior reporter on the old Bristol 'Green 'un'. "I don't care much for much of today's Rugby writing. "They all seem to concentrate on particular incidents. With John, you always seem to get a balanced view of the whole game."

Mickey Booth was too good a resource to lose, when he gave up playing. He was drafted straight on to the Club Committee, and was a Selector for about nine seasons. He also became Gloucester's first Club Coach. He is now in his sixth season as a South West Selector, and is in his second season as part of the England management team.

His sporting interests aren't confined to Rugby, however. He played cricket for Kingsholm and Longlevens, and scored four centuries. Nowadays, he's very much into bowls, and will be Captain of the Barnwood club, next season. He has just been awarded his County badge, and last season appeared in the triples at the prestigious Worthing tournament.

Asked about present-day Rugby he says "I would have loved to have played in the League system." He would probably have been just the boy for it, too.

"It gave me the greatest of pleasure, he says, "When Richard Mogg was invited to tour with the Barbarians. He's my picture of what a Rugby player should be. Always there when you need him, plays his heart out, and never seeks a word of praise."

All true enough, but somehow that comment says as much about Mickey Booth as it does about Richard Mogg.

MICKEY'S TOP XV

We asked Mickey Booth to select his best-ever Gloucester XV, from the people he either played with or has seen since. For once in his life, M. Booth Esq. chickened out.

"To be fair," he told us "I would pick the 1972/3 Cup side *en block*. But that would exclude three fellows I named before — Don Rutherford, Bill Patterson and Terry Hopson, which I wouldn't want to do."

"You see, that side, with people like Mike Potter, Eric Stephens, and of course, the Captain, Mike Nichols, was a real team, quite apart from the abilities of any individuals. People don't remember now, but that side, with a few other regulars, played together for about five or six years, which is a long time for a settled side in Rugby terms."

"In fact, a good many of us are still together, very involved in the Club, in various capacities, and that experience at administrative level, is very valuable indeed. Even those who aren't active in that way are always about, supporting the Club and available for advice."

"Only the other night, I went to a barbecue, and it was just like old times. Almost the whole side was there!"

Fair enough, Mick. Not a bad way to look at things, we'd say.

Forthcoming Attractions

No club is any better than the talent it has coming up through the ranks. We can all think of sides who have dominated, for a year or two, and then faded into relative obscurity, as the stars reached for the end of their playing days, and found that the players who took their places simply weren't up to it.

Yet Gloucester has always been there or thereabouts. Throughout the respective golden ages of Gosforth, Leicester, and latterly, Bath, the Cherry-and-Whites have consistently been 'the' side to be reckoned with.

It isn't any coincidence. Since the early 60's, Gloucester has had a highly effective and successful Colts system — one which has paid enormous dividends in terms of the sheer playing strength of the sides which the club has been able to turn out, week after week, season after season. With a few honourable exceptions — Richard Pascal springs to mind — just about every one of our leading players spent time in the Colts side.

There was a good example earlier on this season. When Gloucester scored their famous victory over Bath, ten of the side were ex-Colts.

Part of the secret, according to Reg Collins, who should know, and to whom we all owe a great deal for his dedication to Colts Rugby, is that we don't actually run an elite Colts squad, week after week. About a dozen games are played during the season, and between whiles, young players return to their clubs, gaining experience, where it matters, in hard, uncompromising local Rugby.

An aspiring player will train with the Gloucester Colts, play an evening game against somebody like Bath or Nuneaton (very tough opposition!), and then find himself on Saturday, operating alongside tough and experienced clubmates, who have forgotten more about the game than he's had a chance to learn yet. Think about the number of ex-Gloucester players who are turning out for local Clubs, for perhaps coaching them, and you get the idea.

Furthermore, the system means that a Colts shirt is worth winning. It isn't like playing for the junior side of a senior club.

There are advantages to the local clubs too. The colt who turns out for them on Saturdays is likely to be a much better player than the green youngster who went along to Kingsholm, just to see if he could make the grade.

Around 60 young players turn up for the Colts trials at the start of each season, and there can't be many clubs in the country who can claim better than that. They can't all turn out to be Richard Moggs, of course, but they're given every chance to do so, and even the ones who aren't quite as good as the others benefit from the experience.

The result? A lot of happy young Rugby players, and a continual stream of lifeblood into the senior sides.

Two years ago, Gloucester Colts went through the season unbeaten, a remarkable feat, when you consider the strength of the opposition. They very nearly did as well last season, and were, in fact, a shade unlucky not to repeat the dose. Reg Collins and his willing team of John Dix and John Powell are again, doing an amazing job. Several Colts play for the United side, and a few have gained First XV honours while still qualifying for Colts Rugby.

Outside-half Neil Matthews is a case in point. He's now played several First Team games, and indeed, did so while he was the reigning England Colts fly half.

But he's not alone. Think of the young players now beginning to emerge from our Colts side. Forwards such as Andy Deacon and Tony Windo will surely make the grade, and you could say that Dave Sims already has. However to go on would be invidious, and would almost certainly result in some deserving player being forgotten from the roll of honour.

It's also worth mentioning the local clubs who, in spite of an increasingly competitive season of their own, continue to encourage their young players to try their luck at Kingsholm. Without such support from the local scene — surely the strongest in the country — there wouldn't be such an effective Colts set-up at Gloucester RFC. We owe them a sincere debt of gratitude, and hope that their enlightened feelings about such matters continues.

You could say that we're lucky in our Colts system, but the fact of the matter is that there's precious little luck about it. A great deal of work goes into the whole thing, you have to have the right expertise to bring young players on, and, above all, you have to have the young players to call on.

Which brings us full circle. If Gloucester weren't the famous and successful Club it is, then young players would not be attracted into the game in the first place. And if that happened, Gloucester wouldn't remain famous and successful for long.

Heaven forbid!

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Kingsholm: A Venue to be proud of

It's not possible to miss the developments which have taken place on the Ground, over the past couple of years. Many of them were forced upon us by the legislation which followed the Barnsley fire disaster, and were undertaken purely for safety reasons, but there are others which are aimed fairly and squarely at making Kingsholm the best ground in the country to visit. The quality of our playing surface is undoubted, of course, but today's supporters demand a higher standard of creature comforts than their fathers and grandfathers did.

The Club Shop has filled a long-felt want — one facility where we were certainly lagging behind other major English clubs. It has proved extremely successful, and is always worth a visit, with a whole range of accoutrements and souvenirs, changed and stocked according to demand and availability.

The most recent innovation has been the new Sponsors Lounge, at the Dean's Walk end of the main Stand. Sponsorship money has become a very important part of the Club's revenue, and supportive firms and organisations have a right to expect better facilities than a minimal temporary bar, tucked away at one end of the Complex.

Already, after just a couple of uses of the new lounge, complimentary remarks have abounded, and it is to be hoped that the improved facilities on offer will bolster our loyal Sponsor's confidence in the Club, and encourage others into making, what is now, a very sound PR and marketing investment.

But all eyes are on the Tump. Restrictions placed by the Fire Authorities and Police on the Dean Walk End have enforced a long, hard look on how to make the best of what is now an under-used amenity.

The plan now is for a two-storey development, with standing terraces below, and a series of Hospitality Boxes at first-floor-level. Planning permission has been granted, design is in a late stage, and it is hoped to begin work at around the end of October 1989.

Obviously, it is hoped that local companies will find the new hospitality facilities very attractive to them, and early indications show a significant degree of interest already. The Club Secretary will be happy to hear from any organisation which wants more information.

However, one highly gratifying result has already been achieved. The new facilities will be complete by the start of the 1991 season, which is not only the year of the Centenary of the Kingsholm Ground, but by happy coincidence, is also World Cup Year.

... AND THE ALL-BLACKS COMETH!

The announcement that Kingsholm will host a World Cup game, featuring World Champions, New Zealand, was received with delight by every Rugby fan in the area. The new facilities, coupled with the consequent increase in the permissible gate — possibly to around 15,000 — was a factor which weighed very heavily in Gloucester's favour, when considering the claims of various clubs vying for the distinction.

Leicester's Aylestone Road ground, and Otley's Cross Green are the only two other English club grounds to be so honoured.

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Tailpiece

Peter Arnold reminisces

As I started roughing out this piece, the sun —you know, that yellow thing which shines into the eyes of the opposition in the second half if Gloucester gets the toss right — was streaming in the windows. Mike Teague had just stormed his way into the history books by demonstrating Kingsholm flank forward play to the ANZACS, and Peter Gould had just rung me to see if I had a spare ticket for a cricket match at Bristol. And it wasn't 8 o'clock in the morning yet.

As I actually start typing it out, the sun is still streaming in through the windows, Gareth Chilcott has probably stormed his way out of the history books by demonstrating his right hook, and Peter Gould has just rung me to see why I didn't have this copy ready three months ago.

And it still isn't 8 o'clock in the morning.

Which means that the pubs won't be open for four hours, and I shan't have a chance, until then, to join the general atmosphere of gloat, following the absorbing defeat of Bath in the Courage Clubs Championship.

A BIT DIFFERENT FROM THE ALL BLUES . . .

In fact, so far, the whole of 1989 seems to have been dominated by Bath. Since we all saw the New Year in, we have played the Champions three times, and at the moment, we are leading by 34 points to 24. And, oddly enough, all three games have been played at Kingsholm. The last two were played without the benefit of Mike Teague, who seems, in retrospect, to have dominated approximately the same period, all by himself.

For various reasons. First of all, he influenced the England side to such an extent that his absence through injury allowed Wales to beat England. Then, to a slightly sniffy reception from some sections of the Press, he got himself selected for the Lions tour, and to no one in Gloucester's surprise, proceeded to dominate that too.

I particularly like his remark to the TV cameras, after the Second Test, when he remarked that it was all "a bit different from All Blues Seconds against Spartans."

He got an even stiffer reception, from some quarters, when he decided to go to the South African Centenary Celebrations. On his return he discovered that 17 out of 33 Gloucester City Councillors didn't want to attend any Civic reception held in his honour, which I don't suppose worries him in the least.

Somewhere in the middle of all that frenetic activity, he managed to find time to get married. Not one for sitting around doing nothing, our Mike.

Neither is Keith Richardson. As if the problems of building a cohesive side out of our bunch of rugged individualists weren't enough, he accepted the challenge of coaching the Divisional team. Which has nothing to do with the fact (I keep telling myself) that a Bath coach suddenly declared he'd never liked the Divisional Championship anyway, and three of their players decided that they weren't going to turn out either. Which must be good for our own Captain, the vastly underrated Mike Hamlin, who returned from the England 'B' tour of Spain as their undisputed No. 1 outside half, and for Ian Smith, who now must see a route by which he can gain further honours from the game.

AN 'UNFAIR' COP

We've been in trouble with the Police, too. Only, I hasten to add, over the matter of the allowable gate for big matches. I don't want to rock the boat by getting controversial over it, but it does occur to me that the Club were forced to spend hundreds of thousands of pounds on the Ground precisely *because* we had a capacity of over 10,000 spectators. If we're now going to be restricted to 7,500 (well, 7501, if you count Gareth Chilcott), then, on the face of it, all those hard-earned akkers would appear to have been wasted. And has it occurred to you that the limitation potentially makes a difference of around £6,000 on the gate?

WHITTERINGS

But it's the minor moments which give Kingsholm its special flavour. Like the time when an opposition player, not for the first time, was exhibiting some prima donna-ish qualities, and someone remarked to our respected President, "The trouble with that fellow is, he thinks he's God!" To which the President replied "Ah! Well! I know different!"

It's too good to explain. If the joke escapes you, take a look at the title page.

You can't even get through the Summer without your roots coming back to haunt you. I was in a local pub in Cornwall, during August, with a cousin I hadn't seen for some years. He introduced me to a friend of his with the words, "This is my cousin Peter, from Gloucester."

"Oh! Yes!" came the reply. "How's Tom Palmer?"

Please note, no reference to the game had been made at all. The Cornishman, who it transpired, had played for Truro, just naturally assumed that, if I came from Gloucester, not only must I be involved with the Rugby Club, but I must know Tom Palmer too. Such is fame.

Tom is, of course, a Cornishman himself, originally, but in that, he's something of an exception. At a quick count, I believe ten or eleven of the

side which beat Bath in the League came through our Colts system. I don't know how many, if any, of the Bath team can make similar claims, but it's precious few.

Not that we aren't grateful to our imports. The Caledonian Mr. Caskie is already making an impact, and no one can doubt the abilities of Richard Pascal, who once commented that "It's nice to hear them shouting 'Come on Pasc!' rather than, 'Get moving you Bedfordshire Poofter!' ". His words, you note, not mine.

I could whitter on like this for quite some time, but I'm afraid that this Tailpiece is in danger of wagging the dog, if you see what I mean. I'd like to conclude, however, by thanking all the people, by no means all of them Gloucester supporters, who make complimentary remarks about my weekly ravings, and especially those who furnish me with anecdote, and reminiscence. Keep 'em coming, chaps (and lasses). If you don't, this could be Tailpiece's Last Stand.

PETER ARNOLD

So you think you know your Gloucester?

ANSWERS

- 1 (a) Both policemen, (b) Both played for Cambridge University, (c) Both played for Cheltenham.
- 2 Tom Palmer
- 3 Castle Grim
- 4 Coventry
- 5 1978
- 6 W. J. Jackson, F. M. Stout, M. A. Burton, P. J. Blakeway, S. B. Boyle
- 7 Roy ('Digger') Morris, 1948
- 8 (a) Bedford, (b) Leicester, (c) Nottingham
- 9 (a) Dunn, (b) Etheridge, (c) Jones
- 10 On Boxing Day. He played for Old Merchant Tailors.