THE GLOUCESTER RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB v BATH

YEARS AT 100 KINGSHOLM

80p. Official Programme

Saturday, November 9th 1991 Kick-Off 3.00pm

MATCH KINDLY SPONSORED BY

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BARCLAYS

Worthington BEST BITTER

FOUNDED 1873
President
Canon H. M. Hughes BA.
With thanks to Gloucestershire County Library for the information

Just about 100 years ago this weekend, Gloucester staged its very first representative game on the brand-new Kingsholm Ground. Interestingly enough, the 'Journal' didn't devote nearly as much space to it as they usually did to Gloucester matches, and that is just about reflected by the interest we have in today's Divisional Championship. As I've written elsewhere, there's nothing new under the sun.

The game back then was Western Counties v. Midland Counties, part of the International selection procedure. After the match, a combined team was chosen to represent Western and Midland Counties against London.

Western success was just about on a par with the experiences we have in the Divisional Championship. Midlands won by eight points to nil. The 'Journal' reported: 'The Midlands showed superiority all through', and that was just about the sum total of the report.

The combined side selected after the match included several Gloucester players. Walter Jackson, soon to become Gloucester's first International, played on the wing; the halfbacks were the Gloucester pairing of W. George and S. A. Ball; and George Whitcombe played at prop. W. H. Taylor and A. Collins were picked as travelling reserves.

Also on this weekend, but a few years later, in 1897, Gloucestershire played Cornwall, and won by 16 points to 3. Gloucester were represented by the two Stout brothers, plus Hall and Pitt. Taylor and Hipwood, Fred Lowesey, the Gloucester Club Secretary of the time, wrote 'a dull and uninteresting game'.

His weekend was enlivened, however, by the news that Gloucester, although severely weakened by County calls, had beaten the mighty Clifton, who were at full strength, 13-3. However, he did note that Clifton had scored the first points scored against Gloucester that season.

Not a bad record!
TOUCH LINES
by Peter Arnold

EASY BATH

We don’t usually have the opportunity to welcome Bath this early in the season. Indeed, last time round, we didn’t see them until April. This early League game has been postponed for reasons not connected with the British climate.

In fact, we won that one by 15 points to 7, and then went on to lose at Bath right at the end of the season, so honours are pretty much even-stevens just at the moment.

No League points at stake today, of course, and in this rather strange season, the whole thing feels a bit odd. This is our first home Saturday game since Exeter visited us on October 5th — a full five weeks ago. Nevertheless, the visitors are Bath, with all that that implies, and there seems no reason to think that they are going to be the team to beat this season, as in the several previous ones. Waigs, Harlequins, Leicester have all had unexpected reverses already, but Bath is a win over Northampton, ominously on the way.

As everyone who hasn’t been living on another planet knows, our encounters with Bath, in both League and Cup, have had a very significant impact on the whole of the English season, and with the solitary exception of the Wigan Cup Final, which we won, they have been close, hard-fought affairs, and a pleasure to watch. Perhaps today’s occasion doesn’t have the edge that some of our recent meetings have — that will come later in the season — but any visit of Bath to Kingsholm is an event worth attending, and we thank them for that.

Perhaps it’s just as well that this isn’t a League game. That way our distinguished visitors can enjoy a spot of hospitality during the Kingsholm Centenary season without taking the whole thing too seriously. I hope they do just that.

THANKS TO BARCLAYS

One nice thing about regular Sponsors. Their annual visits give one a series of snapshots of the development of the organisations concerned. This is particularly true of today’s generous benefactors, who have consistently used these occasions to promote Barclays Business Centres, established in 1980.

Countrywide, the network now totals more operations than similar systems run by all the three other major clearing banks combined.

This is a massive undertaking by anyone’s standards, and it has been brought about by research carried out by Barclays in the mid-1980s. This accurately forecast the trend which has, in fact, occurred. UK and foreign banks now offer a much wider range of services that once would have been thought possible. Increasingly complex technologies can become beneficial for any businessman who wants to get on with his own job, without taking a degree in corporate finance.

Alongside this, the banking business has become fiercely competitive, forcing once conservative banks to become far more market oriented. If a bank is to increase, or even hold, its market share, then it must go out and win business in competition with similar institutions. Such thinking would have been here a decade or so ago.

Barclays research showed that, while price is, of course, important, business customers consider high standards of service to be far more valuable. They want all their banking needs to be met promptly and efficiently, and need to know that the advice they receive comes from a genuine expert. Above all, they need a readily accessible banker who really does understand their business. Needs must be identified, solutions presented, decisions made rapidly. In fact, they need someone who can fight their corner and they don’t want their advisor to be here today and gone tomorrow. Continuity is essential.

Barclays have gone to considerable lengths to provide these things through their network of local Business Centres. Staff training alone, has cost some £13 million. Nowadays, Barclays Business Centres can offer the services you’ll ever need. Including some you’ve probably never heard of.

Quite apart from the modernised Southgate Street branch (it’s been there since the 1920s), Barclays now have a Corporate Suite in the Docks. It’s in the Britannia Warehouse, overlooking the Victoria Basin and houses the team of Corporate and Business Sector Managers. It’s a wonderful resource for Gloucester’s business community, ideally equipped
and located to take advantage of the forthcoming
upturn in the economy.
But not today. This afternoon is reserved for
Kingsholm, and we thank Barclays sincerely for
that.

GOLD BOND
The amount of money given away as prizes in our
splendid new Gold Bond Lottery has now passed
£3,000, which isn't bad for just about six weeks of
operation. And that doesn't count the commission
erained by Agents around the City, which can be very
handsy indeed.

Obviously, we'd like you to have the odd flutter, but
on the "If you can beat 'em join 'em" principle, you
might like to consider becoming an Agent yourself. It's
very easy, not very time consuming, and can be even
more profitable than the pure commission figures
indicate, because there's also a little job in the list for
any Agent who has a winner on his books.

Why not ring the amiable David Goldie on
Gloucester 4199695?

GOING SHOPPING?
It's a regrettable necessity with Christmas looming
on the horizon. But it's one you could well combine
with pleasure at our own Club Shop, alongside the
Worcester Street stand. John Beamnand Alan
Townsend will be delighted to point out various
goods to you which would make very good presents
for right-minded recipients.

For example, there are still small supplies of World
Cup memorabilia available — ties, T-shirts etc. And
you'll find the prices highly attractive. Make nice gifts,
come Christmas.

You could even try a plaster bust of Mike Teague —
you've probably seen the series, which has been doing
the rounds for years, but this is the first time that a
Gloucester player has actually attained that particular
Hall of Fame.

There's also a (rapidly dwindling) supply of our
Ground Centenary publication, 'Kingsholm — The
First 100 Years', which has been enthusiastically
granted just about everywhere. At £1.50, it's a
considerable bargain, and again, would make an
excellent stocking filler, especially for some poor exile
living elsewhere these days.

Go and see John or Alan. I'm sure they'll see you
right.

LEICESTER NEXT SATURDAY
As you all know, the Courage Clubs Championship
opens next week, and our contribution to the
beefest is to entertain our most friendly rivals,
Leicester. Knowing how the League works, I wouldn't
let the fact that we've beaten the 'Tigers' already this
season fill you into any false security.

Before that, however, we have a happy little date
with Exeter University next Tuesday, which is always a
cheerful occasion.

To complete the picture, don't forget that today is
Pillington Cup day, and we'll very soon know who and
where we'll be playing on November 30th. Wouldn't it
be a blast if it turned out to be Matson, away?

GANGWAY!
Don't forget to keep gangways and steps clear
today, and at the Leicester game next week. PC Fled
and Fireman Fred get quite sniffy with us if we
don't.
ED MARTIN’S FACT FILE

Any club that dismisses the theory that it is one of the toughest things in English club rugby to gain a win at Kingsholm should check with Bath.

The first visit by Bath to Kingsholm was for a scoreless draw in the 1895-6 season. It took Bath another 21 visits before they could post their first Kingsholm win — they squeezed home 10-8 against the Cherry and Whites in 1927-8.

Bath then had to wait until 1938-9 for their second win and then to 1966-7 and 1967-8 for their third and fourth wins. To date, Bath have visited Kingsholm on 78 occasions and have won just seven times (Gloucester have won 54 of the encounters with seven of the matches drawn).

It might look a rather dismal history for Bath. But the club could well point out that they have won three times at Kingsholm in the past five seasons — and that Gloucester are given a torrid time at the Recreation Ground where the Cherry and Whites have failed to win since 1981-2.

The biggest embarrassment Bath has suffered at Kingsholm was the 51-7 defeat in 1976-7 — and it took them until the Cup Final at Twickenham to put egg on Gloucester’s face! The most points scored by Bath against Gloucester at the Recreation Ground is 26 in 1987-8 when the fixture was drawn (Bath’s 24-9 home win in 1979-80 is their best win against the Cherry and Whites in Bath).

The Bath fixture provides two other interesting Gloucester superlatives. Gloucester won all 14 meetings between 1895-6 and 1903-4 scoring 271 points to Bath’s total over the 14 matches of just THREE!

Then there is the matter of the 39-game unbeaten streak against Bath between 1895-6 and 1922-3. When the streak was snapped at Bath, with Gloucester winning 9-6, the playing record of the Cherry and Whites against Bath stood at 26 wins and four draws with Gloucester scoring 445 points and Bath 57.

RECORD AGAINST BATH FROM 1891-2 TO DATE

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ROY FOWKE

Like most people, I was considerably saddened by the news of the death of the indomitable Roy Fowke, bearer of a famous Gloucester name, and something of a legend in his own right. One could write at very great length about Fowke, but Peter Ford summed it all up very concisely, calling him a players’ player, and there’s no finer accolade than that.

Roy was the absolute image of a typical Gloucester forward; hard, fast, not given to taking prisoners. Sometimes I felt that he reserved his best performances for the County, in the days when that really meant something.

He’ll be badly missed from the Gloucester scene, but we do have the considerable consolation that his son Bobby is now back at Gloucester, and bidding fair to carry his father’s banner nobly. And we mustn’t forget the rest of the clan, stalwarts of the Spartans.

To these, and all the family — Roy’s brother Jack also played for Gloucester, of course — our heartfelt sympathy.

NO HARM IN TRYING

It’s amazing what some people will get up to. One of our members — I don’t know who and wouldn’t tell you if I did — was fortunate enough to be allocated a ticket for the England World Cup Qualifier Final at Wembley.

He’d had to wait a very long time, apparently.

So much so that he rang the office on the following Monday, and pointed out that, as he had spent his own money getting to Wembley, he had proved that he was a genuine and committed England supporter, and should therefore also be allocated a ticket for the Murrayfield Semi Final.

Of course, in trying to be fair to everyone in a genuinely no-win situation, the idea was to let our meagre supply of tickets go on a one-off basis, and avoid showing preference to anyone, so his impeccable logic didn’t succeed in producing yet another magic piece of cardboard.

What the FA Gendarmes said on receiving the telephone call isn’t recorded. But Terry Tandy’s comments on having the matter referred to him are.

And they wouldn’t be shown on TV before nine o’clock in the evening.

Gloucester supporters are known for their ingenuity in such matters, but this play is even more diabolical than most. It almost deserved to succeed. But not quite.

WINNING AT CARDIFF

As everyone knows, Gloucester have now won at Cardiff Arms Park for the first time since 1935. Keith Richardson considers that Cardiff were happy to settle for the eventual 11-6 scoreline, so complete was the Gloucester forward domination.

That is a mighty achievement, and it reminds me of the dear, dead days when Worcester Street would be completely blocked by supporters on the day of a Cardiff match. But in my time, we never won in the Principality’s capital city.

Indeed, I remember being told, years ago, by a venerable Cardiff ex-player, that the saying at the Arms Park in those days, was that Cardiff could turn out fifteen men with wooden legs, and Gloucester wouldn’t beat them.

I wonder if Keith Richardson counted the legs of the Cardiff players on Friday last? Apparently, counting Gloucester supporters’ legs after the match would have been easier. Many of them were legless.

LADIES FIRST

No longer is the Gloucester RFC Match Mascot an exclusively male preserve. The breakthrough for the sex discrimination lobby has arrived with Gemma Jewkes, who leads the side out today.

Gemma is 16 years old (she insists on the half), and has a passion for all sports, her two priorities being rugby and soccer. She attends Nymansfield School at the moment, and plays football for the Ring’s Stanley Under 11’s.

What she really wants to do is play women’s rugby, but hasn’t found a team yet. However, Stroud High School, which she hopes to attend soon, does have a women’s side, and she’s determined to play for them. Perhaps today’s exercise will help a little.

Gemma is the daughter of Robert Jewkes, who is a partner in the Cheltenham-based Cornish Carpets. That company was down to sponsor the South Wales Police match, which you know, never took place. We couldn’t disappoint Gemma, however, so here she is today.

Cornish Carpets were disappointed too, and we’re sorry they were let down in this way, through no fault of ours. However, it’s nice to know that we’ve been able to arrange some hospitality facilities for them today, and perhaps that will compensate to some extent. Hope they’ll be able to go the whole hog on a not-too-distant future occasion.