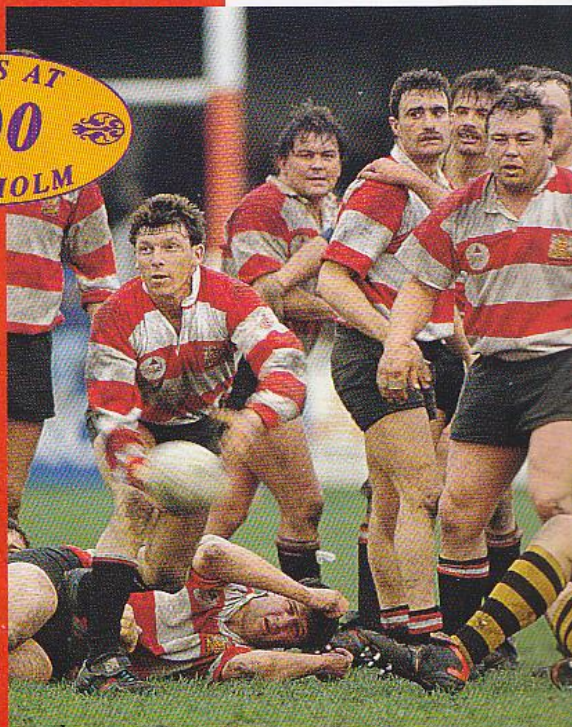
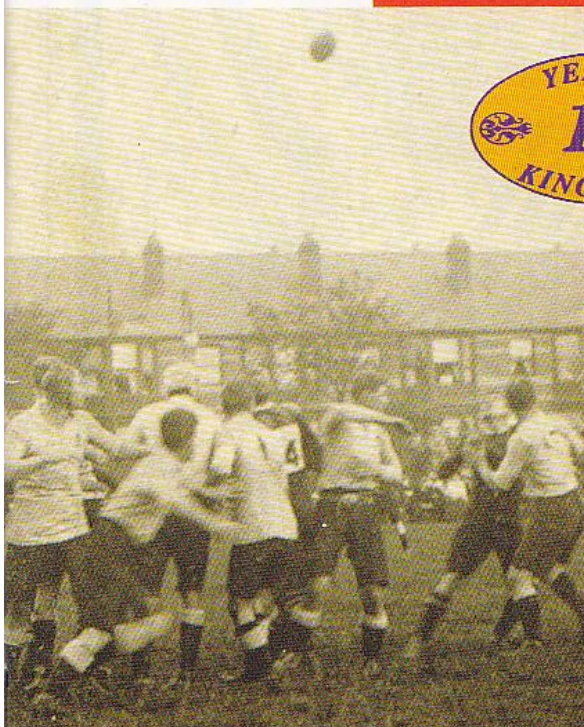


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RUGBY FOOTBALL  
CLUB

V

**PONTYPRIDD**



**80p.**

Official Programme



FOUNDED 1873

President:  
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Friday, January 31st 1992  
Kick-Off 7.00pm

MATCH KINDLY SPONSORED BY

**PLUMB CENTER**



OFFICIAL SPONSORS







# TOUCH LINES

by  
Peter Arnold

## BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD

The singer, Dean Martin, once commented that he felt sorry for teetotallers, condemned to wake up in the morning and realise that this is the best they're going to feel all day.

Last Thursday, I was reflecting on the truth of this, while enjoying my usual breakfast of tea and lightly poached paracetamol, when the tranquillity of the Arnold household was disturbed by the harsh tintinnabulation of the telephone.

Such events, at that time of the morning, usually herald a disaster, like earthquake, the collapse of Westgate Bridge, or Terry Tandy wanting something in a hurry.

Terry it was, informing me that Newbridge had cried off, being forced to do so by the necessity of playing their twice-postponed Heineken Cup game against Maesteg. Pontypridd had gallantly stepped into the breach, and could I do something about it a bit quick? Well — I wouldn't do it for everybody, but for Pontypridd I'm happy to make an exception.

I have fond memories of trips to Sardis Road, one of the Principality's pleasanter grounds, with a clubhouse which is hospitable even by Welsh standards. In fact it's the only Welsh ground where I have heard a crowd of home supporters happily joining in the chorus of 'We are the Gloucester Boys' — and if you haven't heard that sung by a slightly-lubricated Welsh male voice choir, then you haven't lived.

It's very good of Pontypridd to step in at such short notice, and pleasant for all of us, because we wouldn't have seen them this season, otherwise. Last year, Gloucester won by 38 points to 15, but one can't read too much into that in the circumstances. We hope that they have an evening which is even more memorable for its unexpectedness, and welcome them most sincerely.

And we must thank our printers, Stoate & Bishop, too. It's easy enough for me to rally round, but not so simple when you have to rethink the operation of a whole print works. Thanks, chaps!

## THANKS, THANKS AND THANKS AGAIN

I have to put it that way, because there are three prominent companies to thank for generous sponsorship this evening. The Plumb Centre are old friends, of course — they have sponsored the Coventry game for the last two seasons — and we are very grateful to

them for their continuing support. Tonight, they have persuaded Baxi Heating and Marley Extrusions to join them, and those are two names well worth conjuring with.

As anyone in the trade knows, our own friendly, neighbourhood PLUMB CENTRE is based in Cole Avenue, which means we have a local outpost of Wolsley Centres Limited, who are the largest plumbing and heating merchants' business in the country. A couple of years ago they were selling 25,000 boilers, 1.6 million radiators, 23 million pipe fittings, 150,000 pairs of taps, 140,000 shower mixers and 10,000 miles of copper pipe in one 12 month period, and that's a fair bit of hardware when you come to think about it. And you'll probably know about their 'own label' range of products which covers everything from a simple tool to a complete flat-pack kitchen or bathroom.

It's an impressive story, and when you add to that the resources of their two confederates in tonight's praiseworthy endeavour, you have a front-row trio to be reckoned with.

BAXI HEATING have come a very long way since 1866, when they were founded as a small iron foundry in Chorley, Lancs. In fact the name 'Baxi' is now a household one, standing for one of the most important heating appliance manufacturers in Britain. Even I have heard of the 'Baxi Bermuda' range of gas-fired back boilers, and the company is equally involved in the newer, highly successful, field of wall-mounted boilers. Not to mention the latest design in such appliances as free-standing gas-fired boilers, and 'Brasilia' space heaters, gas fires and renewal fire fronts.

If 'Baxi' is a household name, so is 'Marley', famous since 1924 for concrete roof tiles and similar products. MARLEY EXTRUSIONS supply PVC plumbing materials, which have been around since 1959, PVC soil and waste systems, introduced in 1963, PVC underground drainage systems, which first came along as long ago as 1968.

They also supply soffit fascia cladding and fencing systems, and, of course, the whole lot is distributed through the impressive Plumb Centre network.

It's Bill Beamish we have to thank for the Kingsholm connection. Everyone knows Bill, of course. Not only a wearer of the cherry-and-white strip himself, but a

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## MORE TOUCH LINES

legendary Longleaves coach. It would be something of a surprise if there weren't a few of his products out on the pitch this evening.

Bill, and everyone — thanks a lot. We hope you have a great evening, and that we can do it again, some time.

### GOOD PEDIGREE

Our Match Mascot this evening is Brendan Meager, who is aged 7. He's a good Forester, attending Bream Junior School. Obviously he supports Gloucester, but also, quite understandably, feels some allegiance towards Lydney. Apart from being a rugby man, he has an impressive list of interests, which include computer games and — very nice to hear, these days — reading.

The Lydney leanings are only to be expected. His Dad isn't by any means unknown in West-of-Severn rugby circles, and his uncle is Jerry Price, who you may well remember playing for Lydney. What's more, he turned out for England Colts, the Royal Navy and the Combined Services.

The saga doesn't end there. Brendan's brother, John, has already played for Lydney Colts. So our mascot has quite a family tradition to live up to. And I think we may say that he has made a good start.

### CUP NEXT SATURDAY

...weather permitting. As you will have read, the RFU have decreed that the frost-kick Pilkington Cup games will be played on February 8th, superseding the scheduled Courage League games. That means that, for the occasion, London Irish will have to give way to fellow-exiles, London Scottish, which is hard on the Irish because they have already been knocked out of the Cup, and so are left without a match, short of some pretty rapid negotiation with other sides in a like situation.

Obviously, stand tickets already sold for last Saturday will gain admission with no problems. Terry Tandy tells me that there are still a few available at £6.00, should you be one of those who delayed purchasing one until you saw what the weather was like.

You'll probably recall that we weren't selling Ground tickets beforehand, so if you prefer to stand up, then it's business as usual, except that it might be a good idea to get here a little earlier to avoid scrums at the turnstiles.

Do remember that 'all pay' means just that. It

includes the car park, which, we have reason to believe, will be packed to the gills, anyway. You may want to consider catching a bus, just for once, or if you do bring the chariot with the intention of finding a space outside the ground, then do be a bit careful where you do it. The neighbours, not to mention the Bill, can get a bit cross sometimes, and you can't really blame them.

I wonder if it's an omen? Some years ago, we had just the same problems over the visit of Gosforth, who were then the Cup Holders. When the game was rearranged, we won it, and went on to win the John Player Cup ourselves. Perhaps someone should tell London Scottish. Superstitious lot, these Celts.

### TICKETS FOR BATH

It has come as something of a surprise to learn that Bath, in their wisdom, have decreed that their League game against Gloucester on Saturday, February 29th, shall be an all-ticket affair. Only ground tickets are available, at £4.00, but it is apparently not impossible that you may be able to transfer to the Stand once you get into the ground.

I suppose it's something of a compliment that Bath, with their comparatively limited accommodation, have regarded Gloucester as a big enough attraction to take this step which is, in Terry Tandy's very considerable experience, unprecedented. At least, he hasn't heard of a similar case for a Courage Clubs Championship game.

Ground tickets will be on sale at the office, as usual, between 10.00 am and 2.00 pm each weekday — but for season ticket holders only until Wednesday, February 12th. Don't forget to produce your season ticket.

Alternatively, there's nothing to stop anyone from applying by post, enclosing the usual stamped addressed envelope.

After Wednesday the 12th, of course, it's open house.

This being so unusual, there are no competition rules to cover the eventuality. This means that Bath don't have to provide us with any tickets at all, if they don't want to. Not that they would be so mean-minded.

It does occur to me, however, that with the proposals for the League to be played on a home-and-away basis, this could be the shape of things to come.

## ONE FIRST CLASS TEAM SUPPORTING ANOTHER



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## ED MARTIN'S FACT FILE

This evening's game against Newbridge sees the fixture into its 31st season. Like most of the current regular meetings with Welsh opposition, Newbridge always provides Gloucester with a tough task — the Welshmen are a nose in front over the series of 37 encounters.

Both teams find it difficult when travelling — out of 20 encounters at Kingsholm, Newbridge have only managed five wins and two draws, while at Newbridge, Gloucester have only posted three wins and one draw.

So, another clear case of "home field advantage" being a good indicator as to the winner! But in the opening exchanges of the fixture, the Welsh club did rather well — home and away.

The first-ever meeting — and the first visit of Newbridge to Kingsholm — in 1960-61 season saw the Cherry and Whites easy home 8-3. Then the Welshmen won the next four matches — two in Gloucester and two in the Principality.

Gloucester's first visit to Newbridge, in 1964-65, was a disaster. Five matches previously, Gloucester had gone up to Coventry and returned, tails between legs, after a 45-0 embarrassment. In a similar day to that in Coventry, not only did the Cherry and Whites fail to score at Newbridge, but the home side racked-up 42 points!

The three Gloucester wins at Newbridge all came in the first half of the 70s — 10-3 in December 1970, 23-18 in March 1973 and 21-0 just before Christmas 1973.

### GLoucester v NEWBRIDGE 1891-92 to date

	P	W	L	D	PF	PA
At Kingsholm.....	20	13	5	2	286	213
At Newbridge .....	17	3	13	1	152	266
Total .....	37	16	18	3	438	479

## BACK THEN

On January 29th, 1898, Gloucester had another interesting Welsh occasion. They visited a side called Llwynypia, of whom, I confess, I had never heard. Fred Lovesy, the Gloucester Secretary, notes:

*This was Gloucester's first match against Llwynypia. Gloucester were without F. Stout, A. Pitt and T. Hatherall.*

Were they taking it a little easy and resting a couple of people? If so, they miscalculated, because the new opponents actually beat them — just. Mr. Lovesy again.

*An interesting and exciting game, Gloucester leading by a goal at half-time. Llwynypia scored their second try on the stroke of time.*

It wasn't a flash in the pan, either. Gloucester struggled to beat them by 8 points to 3 in the return match at Kingsholm a couple of months later.

No one knows who scored Gloucester's try in that first match. It's recorded that Percy Stout kicked the conversion, but, to quote Fred Lovesy once more,

*Hall and Watkins both claim having scored the try, so it is not given to either of them.*

Which seems a bit high-handed. I wonder what Graham Spring would have made of it?

Llwynypia were obviously a power in the land. Their winger, W. M. Llewellyn, won 20 Welsh Caps between 1899 and 1905, and the Captain, R. Hellings, who played scrum-half, played for Wales nine times between 1897 and 1901.

A few days later, Gloucestershire played the full-back, all four threequarters, and two forwards from the Gloucester side in their match against Glamorgan at Cardiff. They lost by 11 points to 6, but were not unhappy about it. Fred Lovesy, always trying to be fair, explains:

*Gloucestershire sent a very poor team, consequently the result was a great surprise, the match being looked upon as a soft thing for Glamorgan, as they had a very strong team out. This was only a friendly match, in return for the one played at Gloucester on January 6th, 1898.*

*A fine, open game, Gloucestershire leading by two tries at half-time. The score indicates the state of the game.*

Which seems fair enough. Would we have admitted a representative team containing the Gloucester full-back and all the threequarters as being 'very poor' I wonder? Probably not in public, anyway.



# TAILPIECE

by  
Peter Arnold

## TUFFLEY IN THE MONEY

A couple of weeks ago, I mentioned an impression I had that a disproportionate amount of money from our superb Gold Bond draw was going to the Tuffley area. I wasn't implying anything sinister, just that the luck seemed to be going that way.

Now I have some proof, David Golder, the Fund Manager, has been kind enough to send me some figures.

So far, the Draw has paid out £9,000 in prizes of £100 each, plus £450 in consolation prizes, and remember those sums don't include the cash presented to the Agents who sold the winning cards.

Of the £100 winners, Tuffley has provided almost 20%. The next luckiest area is Tredworth with around 11%, and Longlevens with about 9%. So Tuffley has had almost twice as many winners as the next area.

Looking at the distribution of Agents and the number of tickets sold, there doesn't seem any obvious reason for this except the pure luck of the draw. Perhaps they have more than their fair share of black cats in Tuffley.

The remaining winners are spread out very evenly, and they range from Stroud, through Bishop's Cleeve to the wilds of darkest Oxfordshire.

Isn't it time some of that cash came your way — either as punter or Agent? Ring Dave Golder, or Mike Burton himself, if you like, on Gloucester 419666.

## THE LUCK OF THE IRISH

Bad luck, this time. It's all very well to ordain that Pilkington Cup matches shall be replayed on Saturday, February 8th, but where does that leave our Courage Clubs Championship game against London Irish?

The answer is, pretty much up in the air at the time of writing. In fact, the way things work out, the options are very limited. Of course, a lot depends on whether we win our Cup game against London Scottish or not, but if we do, then the last quarter of the season looks fairly congested. There would be Cup and League dates to consider, of course, but also the International weekends. If we have the skipper — and perhaps others — involved with the Scottish squad, and the Exiles have similar commitments to Ireland, then it doesn't look likely that our scheduled Friday evening games will be interfered with. And with Easter Saturday already booked for the postponed Wasps

League game, I wouldn't think that Keith Richardson or the players would particularly want to use Easter Monday for the purpose.

Of course, we're not the only side to have such problems. On February 8th, there won't be one League Division One game played. Murphy's Law has decreed that the side with a blank League Saturday is Bristol, who have already played their Cup game.

I do feel for Mike Nicholls, who is going to have to sort the whole mess out, as far as Gloucester is concerned. League rules say that the two sides concerned in a postponed game have to agree a date to try again within seven days of the postponement, or the organisers will set one for them. With just about every Division One side affected, I would think that there's going to have to be some sort of relaxation of that rule.

The saving grace is that there is no ruling about playing under floodlights. If both sides agree that they will do so, then so be it. In fact, Nottingham and Orrell were going to do just that in respect of their postponed match — then they got that one frosted off too.

Who'd be a fixture secretary? Still, if anyone can find an answer, Nick will.

All the rest of us can do is watch and pray.

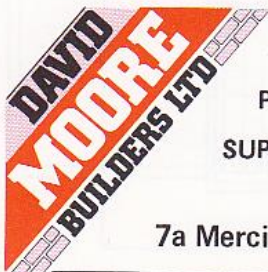
## THE SCOTTISH DIMENSION

I think that Ian Smith did all that could be expected of him in the Calcutta Cup match, and that he thoroughly deserves another go in circumstances that may suit his fireball style of play better. His tackling attracted favourable comment, and David Sole stated that all the new Caps acquitted themselves well. Again, we watch and pray.

Nice to see that Pete Jones and Don Caskie have retained their spots in the Scotland 'B' side. Pete Jones, of course, has the disadvantage of shadowing the skipper, but Don Caskie just has a fighting chance of taking the final step to a full International Cap.

Sean Lineen is injured, and rates himself as only a 50-50 prospect for the next International, and there are doubts being expressed in Scotland about the form of the present two centres. Don was undoubtedly the outstanding threequarter on view in the last 'B' game, and a good performance this time round could just win him the nod.

Best of luck to all three of them. We'll be rooting for them.



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