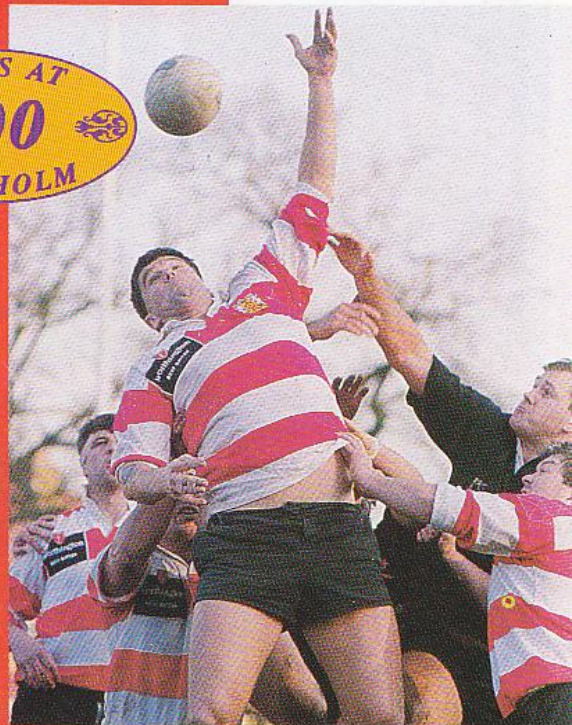
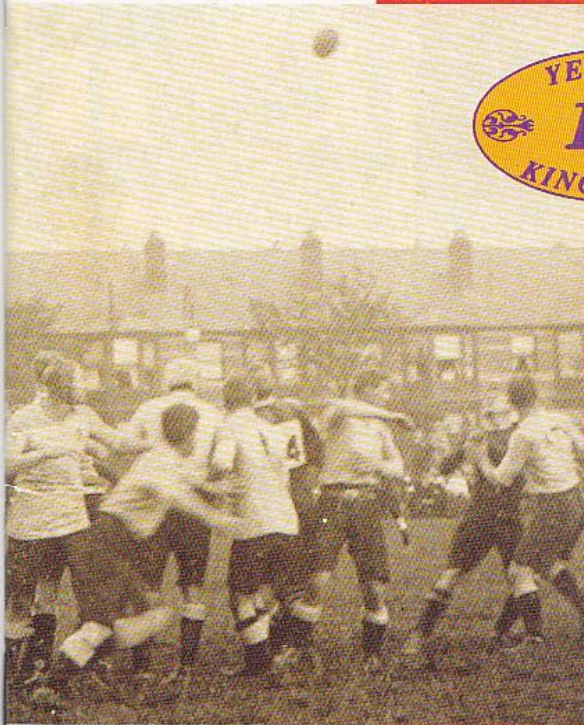


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CLUB

V
PONTYPOOL



80p.
Official Programme



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Friday, March 6th 1992
Kick-Off 7.00pm

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TOUCH LINES

by
Peter Arnold

A TROUBLE SHARED

... is a trouble halved, they say. If that's so, then Pontypool are even more welcome than usual this evening. While we're still smarting about events down at Bath last Saturday, our visitors must be equally peeved at losing narrowly to Pontypridd in the Heineken League on the same day. I'm told that the result put a kink into a very creditable run by 'Pooler' and that the lads from the Park are showing signs of once again becoming the feared force that they were in the days of the famed front row with David Bishop behind the scrum. Remember Max Boyce?

'Up-and-under, here we go,
Are you ready, yes or no?
Up-and-under, here we go,

It's the song of the Pontypool Front Row!

The famous trio (Graham Price, Charlie Faulkner and Bobby Windsor, as if you need reminding), were, of course, tremendous, but I always thought that the mythology which grew up around them didn't really do justice to the likes of Terry Cobner, Geoff Squire and Chris Huish. Indeed, during those years Pontypool had the most effective club pack in Britain, and it would be true to say that Gloucester had as good a record against them as anyone, especially at Kingsholm. Although in 1981 we were the only English club to win at Pontypool Park, an achievement only shared by Aberavon and Llanelli among the Welsh sides.

We did the same thing last season, winning a see-saw game, 24-21, so Pontypool will be wanting to put the record straight this evening.

If 'Pooler' are always good value on the pitch, they're no less so in the Clubhouse. I well remember one evening when we had just held on to win a very hard-fought game, and quite unperturbed, Bobby Windsor described Gloucester as 'the club most like a Welsh club in England.' Having sunk a fair amount of Brain's in various Principality clubs in my time, I consider that a compliment.

Which is just one more reason why Pontypool are very welcome tonight. We hope we can live up to our reputation.

THANKS TO MIDLAND BANK

Did you notice that when various major banks were announcing their results for 1991, last week, the only

one to be in the black was Midland Bank? I don't suppose that their continuing and very valued sponsorship at Kingsholm can take all the credit, but I like to think we helped.

Incidentally, one is prompted to wonder — when a bank goes into the red, who sends them a dirty letter?

In fact, this is the third year in a row that Midland Bank's Corporate Banking Team in Gloucestershire has supported us in this way. In these difficult economic times, with the country fighting hard to claw its way out of recession, we really appreciate such support when corporate hospitality is a low priority for so many companies. Gloucester RFC can't claim to be alone in this regard. Bowls fans, like Mickey Booth, will have noticed that it was Midland Bank who were the principal sponsors in last week's televised World Championships.

But the cherry-and-white connection does highlight the Bank's commitment to being involved with the local community, and this is particularly true of the Corporate team. While we can't blink at the fact that there have been many business failures, nationally and locally, funds are available for the right businesses, seeking to trade through the current difficulties and gear themselves up for the promised recovery.

Indeed, there are still some surplus credit balances about, and they're quite often neglected, but Midland can provide a wide range of interest-bearing accounts to make the most of these funds on long or short term bases. It's all very well discussing interest rates interminably, but it's worth considering the various ways of reducing vulnerability to interest rate movements through either fixed rate lending, or interest rate hedging. The Midland Bank Corporate Lending Team will be happy to talk about it if you ring Cheltenham 236171.

But it's not all business tonight. John Courts, who in any case, misses very little at Kingsholm, is here again with his team and his customers. Included in the party is one of John's Managers, Richard Davies, who is a Llanelli supporter, and must be feeling quite happy about now.

All the other Managers are apparently in the process of being converted, partly because of the World Cup coverage. Tim Ballenger is more at home at the Prescott Hill Climb (or in the bar, writes my corres-

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MORE TOUCH LINES

pondent), Phil Hurden claims that his only handicap on any golf course is his wife, and Rob Williams brainwashes his local under-eleven soccer team to play like his beloved Liverpool, but they're all coming around, gradually.

It's a pretty ecumenical bunch, but very welcome for all that. We do appreciate their sponsorship in these troublous financial times, hope they have a great time, and look forward to welcoming them back next season.

WE HAVE ANOTHER MARCUS

Our Mascot, this evening, is Marcus Rayer. He's 10 years old, and plays his mini-rugby for — yet again — Old Richians. In fact, his Dad, coaches Old Richians Under 10's.

At the moment, Marcus goes to Dinglewell School — which the other Marcus, Hannaford of that ilk, also attended — so it isn't surprising that he plays football for Hucclecote. Not that that stops either Rayer Junior or Senior from supporting Gloucester RFC on a regular basis.

We hope tonight's exercise encourages him to take the game further. Thanks for your help, Marcus, I'm sure that Reg Collins has already noted your name for when you achieve Colts age.

WHERE'S YOUR CAR?

I'm told we're beginning to have trouble with the neighbours. Specifically, those who border the green recreation area off Sebert Street. Apparently, some of our supporters have taken to parking their cars on it at match times.

It's worth pointing out that, not only does this annoy local residents, who value their local green space, not only do the tyre marks enrage the Parks Department, but that it's an offence to park there, and that the police have been informed, and are going to do something about it. Clamps have been mentioned.

You have been warned. I know that it's infuriating not to be able to find a parking place, but please — with the spate of 'big' matches about to descend upon us, the problem is going to become acute and you'd do well to consider alternative ways of getting here. More about that later.

SEMI FINAL TICKETS

Bath at home on April 4th in the Pilkington Cup Semi Final. Now there's a prospect to savour, and I'm sure that Bath won't let last Saturday's result tuff them into any false sense of security. They are, of course entitled to one third of all tickets, and will, no doubt gratefully accept every last one of them.

But you'll be wanting to know how you can acquire your own passport to that particular event, and here's the result of the Committee's deliberations on that subject.

Temporary stands will be erected, which will help Anyone who came along to our 'internationals' early in the season will get the picture. Stand seats — temporary or conventional will cost £8.00. Ground tickets will set you back £5.00.

Grandstand Season Ticket holders will be entitled to one seat each on production of their tickets, which will be stamped. Bearing in mind Bath's allocation, that probably won't leave many for anyone else, but time will tell. Everyone else will be able to buy two Ground tickets, but Stand members will also be entitled to a pair of Ground tickets in addition to their seat.

All tickets will be on sale as from Monday next March 8th. The Office, alongside the Clubhouse entrance, will be open for that purpose from 9.00 am to 5.00 pm, and from 8.00 pm to 9.00 pm each evening, Monday to Friday.

As always, the usual system for postal application applies, but don't forget your stamped addressed envelope. I think that just about covers it.

CONGRATULATIONS!

As expected, after his stormer against Ireland skipper Ian Smith has retained his Scottish place, and we congratulate him for that. Pete Jones stays on the benches, and it occurs to me that David Sole's announcement of his retirement must be good news for 'Joner', who must now have a good chance of the Australian tour. For that matter, Don Caskie might just make the trip, too.

Must forget Dave Sims, either. He keeps on keeping on in the England 'B' side, and if Wade Dooley really does give up at the end of the season, then he must be in the frame for a full Cap too.

Well done, all of them.

ONE FIRST CLASS TEAM SUPPORTING ANOTHER



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TERRY TANDY

It's frequently remarked that you don't appreciate someone until they're gone. While Terry Tandy's work on behalf of Gloucester RFC was always highly appreciated, it would be true to say that it's only now that the void left by his untimely and sudden death has assumed its true proportions. It's not just a matter of finding someone to fill his shoes as General Secretary, it's the realisation that his sheer presence will no longer be felt around Kingsholm which is so hard to come to terms with. No doubt the Club's administration will go on. Others will assume the duties he performed for longer than some of our players have been alive, but it's almost impossible to imagine the Gloucester Clubhouse without Terry's ample figure, pint glass in hand, amiable grin firmly fixed on that cheerful face.

Much the same could be said about Terry's influence in clubs up and down the country — the fact that, within hours of the sad news breaking, Orrell had informed us that they were to hold a minute's silence before the Cup game says that much. The game has lost an experienced and able administrator, but it has also lost a great personality who seemed to have friends everywhere from Gosforth to Plymouth, and from Twickenham to Swansea.

Long cherished

Of course, some of us aren't just mourning the loss of a Rugby acquaintance, but of a long-cherished personal friend too, and none of us have so many of those that we can afford to lose one at such an unconscionably early age. Some of us remember Terry propping for Old Centralians in the days before Saintbridge was ever thought of. Some of us go back further, to the days when he was playing as a schoolboy. Indeed, one or two of us

remember playing impromptu cricket with him on the old Sutgrove playing field at the age of about eleven.

There are other memories, too. Terry Tandy's services as Treasurer and later Chairman of the Gloucester Conservative Club were just about as longstanding as his services at Kingsholm.

Humour

Terry's sense of humour could be a delight. On one occasion I had been unwise enough to print a faintly derogatory remark about a well-known referee who had incurred the wrath of the Kingsholm faithful. The local Referees Society took umbrage, and complained to Mr. Tandy. His reaction was that I was stating my own personal opinion, which had nothing to do with the Club, but that he would have a word with me about it.

This he did, and concluded the conversation by saying "Personally, I thought you were rather kind to him. Have a pint!"

He also enjoyed jokes about his ample girth, a circumstance of which I took full advantage from time to time. One of his favourite stories was that, at one time, some fellow club secretaries and several distinguished press people took to calling him 'Frank', in reference to the gargantuan 'Frank Cannon' of TV detective series fame.

So we've lost much more than a mere club secretary. If it's difficult to imagine Kingsholm with Terry Tandy it's equally hard to imagine Terry without Kingsholm. Our most sincere sympathies go to Nora and the family, which probably doesn't help much, but is heartfelt, nevertheless. The old quotation is probably still the best.

We shall not see his like again.

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ED MARTIN'S FACT FILE

It was 84 years ago that the first fixture between Gloucester and Pontypool was played. And on that day in the autumn of 1907, the Welsh club returned home after a close 5-0 loss to the Cherry and Whites — their first taste of Kingsholm rugby.

To date, there have been 36 visits by Pontypool to Kingsholm — and they have found it relatively hard to post convincing wins on the 11 occasions of Welsh victories. The only time their winning margin has been in double figures was in October 1983 when they beat Gloucester by 17 points (23-6).

As can be seen from the table below, Gloucester have won 20 of the 36 encounters at Kingsholm, with five of them ending in deadlock. That gives the Cherry and Whites a 62.50 per cent winning record — one of their better against a Welsh club.

However, the last decade has been a torrid time for Gloucester when entertaining Pontypool. Of the five encounters in the Eighties, Pontypool won four times — the five matches producing 53 points for Gloucester and 73 for the Welsh club.

The four-game losing streak — the worst against Pontypool at Kingsholm — was snapped last season with a 24-21 win to start the Nineties.

Pontypool, of course, can claim to be slightly better than Gloucester in home games — they have won 23 of the 24 matches, with one ending in a draw.

On six of the visits, Gloucester have failed to score (Pontypool have failed to score five times at Kingsholm). And no doubt there will be a Welshman or two in the bar after tonight's match to remind Cherry and White supporters of a certain result from October 6, 1982 when 67 points were scored — and not many of them by Gloucester.

GLOUCESTER v PONTYPOOL

1907-8 to date

	P	W	L	D	PF	PA
At Kingsholm	36	20	11	5	404	293
At Pontypool	34	10	23	1	270	473
TOTAL	70	30	34	6	674	766

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TAILPIECE

by
Peter Arnold

ROY LONG

It's very hard to have to write two obituaries in one Programme, but it wouldn't have been right to delay any appreciation of Roy Long, who died last week, any longer than one could help.

Roy was a gentleman: a 'gentle man', in all senses of the word, although 'gentle' isn't the word opponents would have first thought of. He was a fierce but fair player, who everyone respected, on and off the field. He was also a good administrator, as his tenure of the Secretaryship of the Club revealed.

Of course, he was known by a far wider circle of people than simply the Rugby fraternity. As landlord of our own 'local', the White Hart, opposite the ground, he won a great many friends from all walks of life. It was typical of the man that for some years, the 'White Hart' was just about the only pub in Gloucester open on Christmas night — simply because Roy knew that there were a fair few old people living around the area who would have been lonely otherwise.

Roy had been in poor health for some time, having paid several visits to Frenchay Hospital. That didn't stop him following the fortunes of Gloucester RFC. Indeed, it wasn't many weeks ago that I discovered, having dropped into the pub and enquired about him, that the previous Saturday had seen him watching the game from his first-floor window.

Gloucester, and indeed, all of us, are the poorer for the loss of Roy Long. I'm sure that his family will know, without being told, that we send them all our sympathies and condolences. But we'll tender them, nevertheless.

PARKING ON THE OXLEAZE?

Well, why not? Just as long as you are ferried from the Ground in an efficient manner.

At the time of writing, negotiations aren't complete, but following a City Council initiative, stimulated by the increasing street parking problem mentioned earlier, it seems very likely that a system will be set up and tried out for the Cup Semi Final game on April 4th. If it works, then the exercise will be repeated for 'big' match days next season.

Cheltenham and Gloucester Bus Company are willing to co-operate, and the City Council will provide the necessary parking space on the Oxleaze. The idea is that drivers will pay a small fee which will cover both parking charges and bus fare. It's worth noting that the fee also pays for a security man on duty throughout the exercise, so your car will be considerably safer than if you leave it in a side street somewhere.

Of course, anyone's welcome to participate, but it's anticipated that the system will be particularly useful for our hordes of supporters who drive in from points west — the Forest, for example.

For that matter, if you're motoring from the Stroud or Cheltenham directions, it's no more difficult to go to the Oxleaze and leave your car in good hands than it is to come to Kingsholm, find the car park is full, which is assuredly will be on April 4th after about 1.00 pm, and then drive round in small circles looking for somewhere to leave your car unattended, in a spot which may not attract the wrath of the Police, the Council or the neighbours.

The scheme should also prove attractive to opposition supporters. For the exercise on April 4th, the Bath club will be informed as soon as details are finalised, in the hope that it can be publicised in their programme and elsewhere.

I don't know whether the idea will work or not, but it's surely worth a try. After all, we're used to being ferried from station to ground when we travel by rail to away games, so it's really only an extension of that.

One thing's for sure. Something has to be done about the street parking problem on major match days. It won't go away, and it won't get any better. And it's nice to see the Club, Council and Bus Company getting together in this way.

Perhaps we're lucky that City Leisure Chief, Alistair McHaffey, and his cohorts, Phil Cooke and Derek Brown are all good Rugby men and appreciate the problems.

ONE FOR THE COACHES

I was afraid that, when Gwyn Hiatt left our City Library in Brunswick Road and took up a new post in Tewkesbury, his flow of information about new Rugby books available from the County Library would dry up. I should have known better.

He now tells me about a new edition of a book called 'Total Rugby', written by distinguished coach, Jim Greenwood. It is sub-titled 'Fifteen-man Rugby for Coach and Player'. It isn't a new book, but has, according to the publishers, been 'comprehensively updated to keep abreast of the modern game.' Gwyn Hiatt tells me that it has been ordered for a variety of libraries across the County, so you should be able to borrow a copy without much trouble. On the other hand, if you want to buy one the publisher is A.C. Black, and it will cost you £12.99.

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