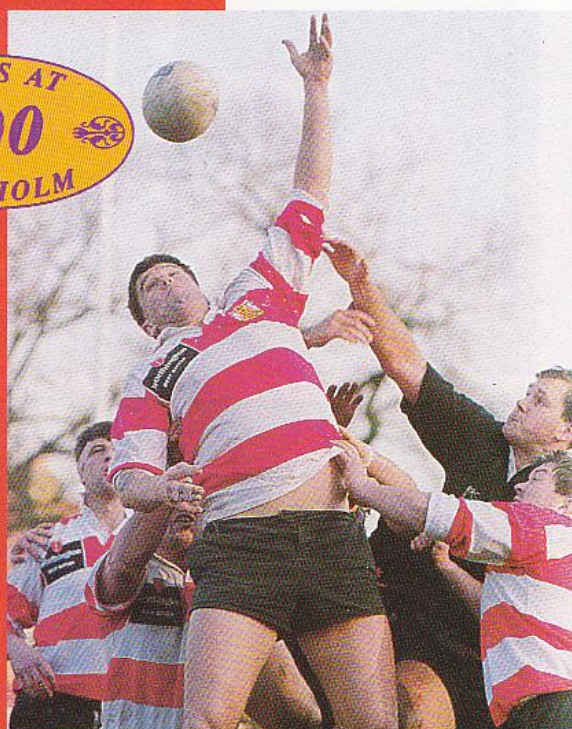


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CLUB**

V
LONDON IRISH



80p.
Official Programme



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Canon H. M. Hughes BA.

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Kick-Off 7.00pm

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GLOUCESTER 22
(Cherry & White)

T G Pts

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15. T. Smith- N MARMENT

14. J. Perrins

13. D. Caskie

12. D. Cummins

11. S. Morris

10. M. Hamlin

9. L. Gardiner

1. A. Windo

2. K. Dunn

3. A. Deacon

4. N. Scrivens

5. D. Sims

6. P. Ashmead

7. A. Stanley (Capt.)

8. S. Masters

Replacements:

L. Beck

P. Jones*

N. Marment

A. Martin

**GLOUCESTER
RUGBY FOOTBALL
CLUB**

SPONSORED BY



Cumulative Match Score

4	0
4	6
4	9
4	15
7	15
10	15
16	15
22	15

Referee: F. HOWARD (R.F.U.)
Touch Judges: J. Grindle, M. Pitt

LONDON IRISH 15
(Green/White)

T G Pts

15. R. Hennessy

14. J. Harley

13. R. Moloney

12. R. Keohane

11. M. Corcoran

10. D. Curtis*

9. N. Briers

1. T. Clancy*

2. J. McFarland

3. M. McCormack

4. C. Buss

5. M. Keenan*

6. P. Collins* (Capt.)

7. R. Culliton

8. A. Verling

Replacements:

D. Robson

P. Bell

*International

22 F/T 15



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TOUCH LINES

by
Peter Arnold

BETTER LATE . . .

Not so much 'better late than never', as 'London Irish have been doing better in the later part of the season'. It was nice to see that they beat Nottingham last week, not that I have anything against the Beeston club. You'll remember, however, that they were a decided power in the land as late as last season, and although they seem to have lost their way this time round, it's still highly creditable for a set of Division One debutants (I had almost written 'virgins'), like tonight's very welcome visitors, to have come away with a victory.

Personally, I have always enjoyed our too-infrequent encounters with the Irish Exiles. Their entry into the top echelon means that we should be playing them regularly now, without the recurring problem of Cup games getting in the way. Last season, for example, Gloucester lost their fourth round game, but Irish didn't, so we have no record of recent meetings between the clubs.

I would certainly recommend anyone to pay a visit to the Sunbury-on-Thames ground. The hospitality always lives up to the Hibernian tradition, even to the extent that the clubhouse extends over the top of the stand — in contrast to ours, where the complex is underneath. This means that, if you feel so inclined, you can sip your Guinness and watch the game, from sideways on, without ever braving the elements.

At the time of writing, I haven't seen the side, but I would assume that it will include some of the cheerful lads who came here at the beginning of the season with the Irish President's XV. Now there was a happy occasion if you like, even if we had been inhospitable enough to win the game. No one seemed to mind very much, obviously believing in the old saying that in England the situation is always serious but never hopeless, while in Ireland the situation is always hopeless but never serious.

Of course, there are valuable League points at stake tonight, but I can't imagine that the natural dash and ebullience of the Irish will be inhibited by that. It is to be hoped that Gloucester will rise to the challenge: after all, it isn't the Exiles fault that we have to travel to Orrell on Saturday.

The fact that Irish haven't been regular visitors to Kingsholm of late makes them all the more welcome. *Cead mile failte!* and then some.

THANKS TO RICKERBY JESSOP FLINT

In fact, thanks for turning up twice. The respected and highly successful firm of solicitors were always down to Sponsor the London Irish game, but the rather odd decision to hold the frosted-off Cup match against London Scottish on the day that his evening's League fixture should have been played, disrupted their hospitable intentions. They invited their guests along, nevertheless, and I'm told, have some more along this evening.

I'm glad about that. Mike Biggar, to whom the notes I have been given refers to as a 'balding, portly has-been', did of course play for Scotland 24 times, so the description is less than respectful. Anyway, several members of staff merit the same and played for a variety of senior and junior clubs in their day. There are even two people who are still playing, so I suppose they are thin, hairy, and still at it.

Nowadays, Rickerby Jessop Flint are firmly based in Cheltenham, and the aforesaid notes comment that, since Michael Flint and Derek Jones joined them in November 1990, the firm's Gloucester connection has grown from strength to strength. 'It is possible', the notes go on, 'to obtain legal advice in Cheltenham without catching anything contagious'.

The idea behind the one-office decision was to concentrate all specialist skills under one roof, and the staff is now approaching 90 in number, which includes 40 Solicitors and Legal Executives, which isn't actually a small organisation. Apparently, about 80% of those 40 now work for the business community in Gloucestershire and beyond. Well beyond, in many cases: Rickerby Jessop Flint have developed associations with firms of lawyers in the leading EC countries.

The notes conclude: 'Many thanks for the opportunity to support Gloucester RFC'. The case is contrarywise. We should be thanking you, and this we do, most sincerely. Doubly so in this case.

CATCHING 'EM YOUNG

Our Match Mascot this evening is one of our younger supporters. His name is Bobby Clarke, and at six years old is probably getting away with something in that it will be well past his bedtime by the time he gets home.

He attends Airthurie School in Cheltenham, and is obviously a little young to have a sporting pedigree as yet. However, his father, who is a partner in Rickerby

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MORE TOUCH LINES

Jessop Flint, tell us that early indications are that his sporting prowess could well be much better than his Old Man's — a comment which could ring a bell with Dick Smith.

I hope Clarke Senior is right in his estimation. After all, until recently we had a more than useful No. 8 of the same name.

THAT PARKING PROBLEM

You may have seen almost identical stories in the 'Citizen' and 'Gloucester News' about both illegal and inconsiderate parking in the Sebert Street area. There was also a picture which quite clearly showed a large number of cars parked on the green recreation area, which is an offence.

To be fair to the group of residents who are complaining vociferously, I don't read their complaints as being in any way anti-Gloucester RFC. Be that as it may, the parking problem with which they are faced is infuriating, and in any case where an emergency vehicle might be involved, could be actively dangerous. I have considerable sympathy for them.

Nevertheless, I think I must point out that it's difficult to think of anything more which the Club could have done to help. We've co-operated fully with the City Council and the Bus Company in providing a park-and-ride scheme (see below) which will come into operation for the Bath match in ten days time. This is the third time in successive weeks that I have outlined the problem in these notes, and I can't believe that none of the offending parkers buy a programme. Furthermore, I have been asking people to use a little discretion about where they park, regularly over the past ten years.

If anyone can think of any other way in which the Club could help, they're a better man than me, and I'd like to hear from them.

Meanwhile, I should also point out that the Dean's Walk entrance to the Club Car Park is now used for cars on Saturdays, and there have been one or two problems of people parking across the entrance. It would be appreciated if drivers who part at that end of the Ground would take due notice of that fact.

PARK-AND-RIDE

As you may have read before, you can make things easier for everyone, including yourself, by taking advantage of the new park-and-ride system which will

be operating for the first time on Saturday week, the afternoon of the Pilkington Cup Semi Final against Bath.

Take your car to the Oxleaze — for strangers to the area, that's on the left-hand side, just over Westgate Bridge at the bottom of Westgate Street, only a minute or two from the ring road which passes the Cattle Market. Leave your car there for just £1.00, which gives you parking, the care and attention of an attendant supplied by the City Council, and a bus ride to the Ground and back afterwards. No struggle to find a space. No worries about the security of your vehicle or its contents. No trek to the Ground. No problems with police or residents.

It's worth mentioning that there's little likelihood of there being any space in the Club Car Park after about 1.00 p.m. what with the probable problems with TV, and one thing and another. The Bath club has been informed of the arrangement so that they can tell their own supporters.

It will be interesting to see how the scheme works out. I suppose that it is inevitable that experience will necessitate some fine tuning, but it does seem a very worthy initiative, well worth persevering with on future occasions. I wish it luck.

TRIVIA

Here's a nice little pice of sporting trivia I came across lately, particularly apt with the late stages of cricket's World Cup in all our minds.

Can you name a New Zealand Test cricketer who played Rugby for England? There is only one.

Answer on the 'Tailpiece' page.

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BACK THEN

What with one thing and another, I haven't had much opportunity to dig into history for a week or two — an omission I now propose to rectify, especially as one game played almost on this date, nearly a century ago, is fairly appropriate.

Cinderford's recent victory over Lydney was a worthy effort, and strikes echoes of a game played against Gloucester, at Cinderford, on March 26th, 1898. The Foresters didn't quite make it, that time, but might well have done so.

Conditions were absolutely dreadful, with a positive typhoon blowing straight across the ground. Fred Lovesy, Gloucester Secretary at the time, writes in his notebook:

"Owing to the hurricane which prevailed, it would be unfair to criticise the play, as football was quite impossible. Gloucester perhaps lucky to win."

The score was 3 points to nil, Percy Stout kicking a penalty goal."

Must have been quite a kick. A little unusually, both teams have been recorded. They were:

Gloucester

George Romans, W. H. Taylor, Percy Stout, F. M. Luce, G. F. Clutterbuck, A. Stephens, C. Cummins, C. Williams, C. Hall, C. Rose, W. Hughes, A. H. Click, F. Goulding, B. L. Watkins, G. H. Smith.

Cinderford

S. Lewis, F. Martin, W. Bevan, H. Williams, E. Baldwin, G. Barton, T. Willstead, W. Leighton, W. Mudway, S. Body, D. Smith, E. Hatton, A. Brain, A. Robins, G. Berrows.

The referee was Mr. A. J. Davies from Cardiff.

Interestingly enough, Gloucester had played another club whose name we seem to see in local results with some frequency these days, only the previous week. Weston-Super-Mare had travelled to Kingsholm and received a right towing. They went home having lost by 50 points to nil.

Gloucester scored 10 tries, and the aforesaid Percy Stout scored four of them, as well as dropping a goal. He seems to have had a good week!

Fred Lovesey's comments drew a decent veil over things.

"A most one-sided game, so that comment would be superfluous."

Who am I to disagree?

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ED MARTIN'S FACT FILE

London Irish is one of the newer fixtures in the Kingsholm Calendar — the first meeting of the clubs being on November 24, 1973 at Kingsholm when the Cherry and Whites posted a 27-9 win.

Gloucester might have survived 99 seasons without a date with the Irish Exiles, but now the fixture is reasonably well established (15 meetings in 18 seasons), London Irish are very near to being able to claim a 50 per cent record overall against the Cherry and Whites.

Of the 15 meetings, Gloucester have won eight, and the Exiles seven. Six of the fixtures have been at Kingsholm, with Gloucester winning four by very comfortable margins — the November 23, 1985 match saw the Cherry and Whites with a 41-point winning margin.

Matches played at Sunbury have been difficult for Gloucester, with London Irish ahead in their home series winning five of the nine encounters. Having said that, Gloucester have outscored the Exiles 140-117 at

Sunbury which means that there have been some "pipped by a couple of points" matches.

In 1980, Irish won 10-9. There have been three occasions when Gloucester have lost by three points. And that brings us to the worst performance of the Cherry and Whites at Sunbury — November 27, 1976 — a nine points loss.

That "record" away loss to London Irish came 12 months after Gloucester's worst performance against the Exiles at Kingsholm. The Irish returned home with a 21-7 win under their belts. On only one other occasion has London Irish reached double figures at Kingsholm — their 12-3 win in 1979.

GLOUCESTER v LONDON IRISH

1973-4 to date

	P	W	L	D	PF	PA
At Kingsholm	6	4	2	0	117	54
At London Irish	9	4	5	0	140	117
TOTAL	15	8	7	0	257	171

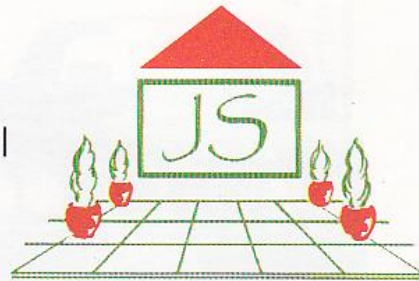
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TAILPIECE

by
Peter Arnold

IN A GOOD CAUSE (I)

I seem to be writing a lot about parking today, especially regarding arrangements for the Bath game on April 4th. Here we go again, but this time it's all in a good cause.

Our old friends, neighbours and valued sponsors Arjo Mecanoids, whose premises adjoin the ground, have decided to make their own car park available on April 4th. They will be charging £1.00 per car, and all the proceeds will go to charity.

The organisation which will receive the money is CLIC, which for those who aren't into these things, stands for 'Cancer and Leukemia in Children', which I'm certain you'll agree is well worth supporting.

Our congratulations on a very worthwhile initiative.

IN A GOOD CAUSE (II)

It's unusual for Gloucester RFC to allow charitable raffles, collections or whatever, during match days, simply because we would be inundated with such requests if we did, and people would soon get fed up with having tins rattled under their noses every time they enter the ground. And that would soon defeat the object of the exercise.

However, we'll be making one of our infrequent exceptions to the rule on Pilkington Cup Semi Final Day. The associations with the initiative are simply too strong to ignore.

If there's one man the Kingsholm Faithful love to hate it's Jon Webb, the Bath and England full back. He always seems to have a good game here, whatever his form generally, and you'll probably remember a traumatic occasion a few years ago when he won a game for a thoroughly beaten Bristol side by scoring two tries virtually all on his own.

For April 4th, 'Webby' has acquired a ball signed by the England Grand Slam squad, and he has offered it for raffling on that day. The appeal in question is for a complex piece of equipment, badly needed for cancer treatment, by our own Gloucestershire Royal Hospital.

'Why Gloucester?' you may ask. 'Why not a Bath hospital, or one where he works himself?'

The answer lies in family connections. Apparently, Jon's brother works at Great Western Road, alongside our own Club Doctor, the amiable Roger Eltringham (who was lecturing in Germany, the last I heard of him, although he may be back now). And incidentally, my principal contact with Mike Burton's organisation on matters relating to the Club Programme is Sue Eltringham, Roger's daughter, who I find it difficult to

refuse anything, hence the write-up today.

So buy a raffle ticket on April 4th. It will help our hospital, and a group of desperately ill patients, help persuade Jon Webb that we're not such a bad lot after all, and also keep the diminutive, delectable and determined Sue off my back.

And who knows — you might win a very rare souvenir.

TRIVIA ANSWER

The question posed earlier was 'Can you name a New Zealand Test cricketer who played Rugby for England? There is only one.

The answer is Martin Donnelly, one of the most elegant and attractive left hand bats I ever had the pleasure of watching. He was certainly in the Graeme Pollock class, and once scored 306 against England in a 'Victory' Test Match.

After that, he had a spell for Warwickshire, and I seem to remember, made a few against Gloucestershire, on one occasion, at the Old Wagon Works. He also toured England with the 1949 New Zealand side, which drew all five Test Matches, largely because they were played over three days.

Post War, he attended Oxford University, in the days when undergraduates, wherever they hailed from, were qualified to play Rugby for England, and won one Cap — I believe in the centre — against Ireland in 1947.

Oddly enough, I can find no record that he ever played for New Zealand, which says something about the relative strengths of the two sides in those days.

BASS COMPETITION

At the Northampton game, you may recall, our benefactors from Bass offered a tray of beer to the first correct answer, drawn out of my outsize bowler, to the question 'Which Gloucester player appeared in England sides which beat both South Africa and New Zealand in successive years?'

It's just as well I'm famous for my big head, because we had a large entry, the vast majority of whom got the correct answer, which was, of course, John Watkins. The name I drew was:

M. G. Chew, 90A, Milbrook Street, Gloucester.

If he would like to see Mervyn Ellway in the Social Club, then Alan Jenkins of Bass should have supplied him with the nectar by now.

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