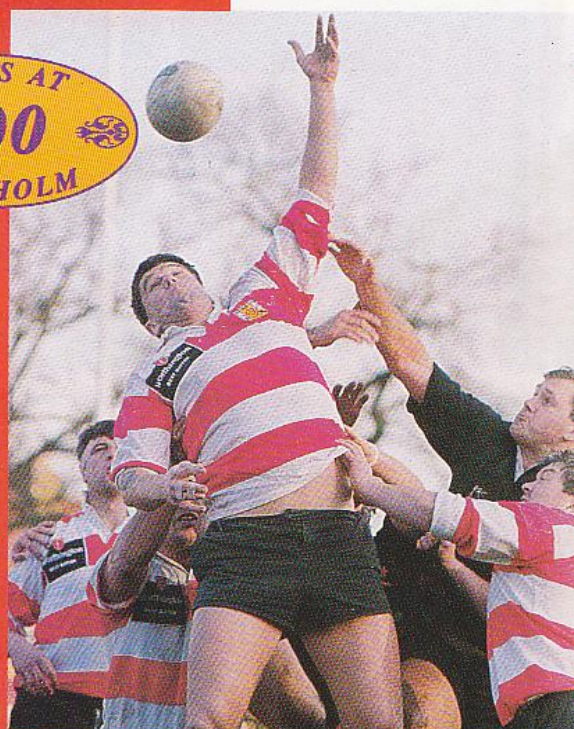


THE  
**GLOUCESTER**  
RUGBY FOOTBALL  
CLUB

V  
**WASPS**



YEARS AT  
**100**  
KINGSHOLM



**80p.**

Official Programme



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President:  
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**Saturday, April 18th 1992**

**Kick-Off 3.00pm**

MATCH KINDLY SPONSORED BY  
**ARJO-MECANAIDS**

OFFICIAL CLUB SPONSORS







# TOUCH LINES

by  
Peter Arnold

## THE STING!

Last Saturday, Orrell lost by one point on the final kick of the match. The kick in question was a 47-yard drop goal, and the kicker was our old friend Huw Davies, who I remember turning out for Coventry against Gloucester in a Cup Semi Final. Nowadays, of course, he wears the black shirt with the gold wasp on the breast, and has replaced the francophile Rob Andrew at outside half.

Of course, that drop goal bids fair to have let Bath in for the League title, and I don't know how you feel about that, but it does prove that the traditional sting in the tail of the Wasp is as lethal as ever.

As you'll recall, we were looking forward to entertaining Wasps as long ago as December 14th, and had the weather not put the kybosh on it, we'd probably have been welcoming Rob Andrew that day. No disrespect to Huw Davies, who is a fine player, but the England outside half always seemed to have a good game at Kingsholm. Remember when he and Nigel Melville at scrum half absolutely took us apart when, following another weather problem and a coincidental draw, the Cup and Merit Table matches were combined in one pulsating occasion?

Last season, in October, we visited Sudbury in the League and came second to the tune of 14 points to 9. Wasps, however, have had something of an up-and-down season, just beating Orell, thrashing Harlequins, for example, but going down badly to Leicester. On the other hand, we've beaten Bath once and lost to them twice, won one and lost one to Orrell, lost to Northampton and given a revived Bristol an honest going over last week, so it ill behoves us to talk about inconsistency. All of which makes today's game, to coin a phrase made boring by pundits during the General Election, too close to call.

But it was ever thus. The visits of Wasps to Kingsholm have always been keenly anticipated and closely fought: just one reason why they're always so very welcome here. Remember, wasps produce their own brand of honey, as well as stings.

Hope you have an enjoyable visit chaps. There are far worse ways to celebrate Easter.

## THANKS TO ARJO MECANAIDS

Very few companies have sponsored games at

Kingsholm more often than Arjo Mecanuids. Which is nice, because Britain's leading designers and manufacturers of mechanical aids for nurses and carers are our next door neighbours. It may surprise you to learn that their new 80,000 square foot premises were opened as long ago as 1985, by the Princess Royal, who also knows a thing or two about Rugby.

In fact, the company — originally simply 'Mecaniads' — is now nearly thirty years old. Their original product, the Ambulift hoist, was the first piece of equipment which nurses ever had to help them lift and bathe patients. Since those days, over 60,000 Ambulifts have been distributed worldwide, and the range of products has expanded out of sight.

Andrew Wozencroft, the Managing Director who also heads the Sales organisation, is an old friend, of course. I'd be surprised if he weren't here today. Of course, he wouldn't get far without an efficient Service Department, and that's headed by Peter Garland. It's a fact that over 70% of the company's customers take advantage of the comprehensive service contract, which says something for the efficiency of it all.

Most of Arjo Mecanuids' sales are made direct to the NHS, Social Services departments, private hospitals, nursing homes, leisure facilities and private individuals. There is extensive advertising and PR in the appropriate press, and you'll find the company represented at everything from the small, local nursing home association meeting, to the national Aidex and Healthcare exhibitions. Nowadays, over 60% of the company's production goes for export.

Martin Matthews is a chap with a lot of responsibility on his shoulders too. It's all very well Chief Engineer Derek Richards and his team devising super new products, and for Chief Production Engineer, Doug Broughton and his staff to take them to shop floor stage, but as Manufacturing Manager, Martin has to buy components, look after production and oversee the all important quality control, as well as looking after storage and despatch.

Our own Gloucestershire Royal Hospital is well equipped with Arjo Mecanuids products, and quite a few Rugby players have had cause to be grateful for that fact, over the years. So it's especially good to be able to welcome them again today, and thank them once more for their generosity and support.

S.E.L.E.C.T



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## MORE TOUCH LINES

### NICE EFFORT

While on the subject of Arjo Mecanuids, it's nice to be able to report that a recent Rugby-related charitable effort by the Company yielded a healthy dividend for children suffering from cancer and leukaemia. You may remember that they opened up their company car park on the day of the Bath game, and I'm told that the exercise raised over £130.

So, if you were one of the people who took advantage of the Arjo Mecanuids car park that day, thereby easing the horrible parking problems besetting the whole City at the time, then I'm sure the Company would want me to relay their thanks to you.

### WELCOME TO THE CHAIN GANG

We have distinguished guests here today. The Right Worshipful the Mayor of Gloucester is usually invited along, some time during the season, and today is that occasion this time around.

The Mayor, Councillor Terry Wathen, has done better this season. he's brought along the Sheriff, Councillor John Neary, which is nice, but hardly necessary, because you can't keep John away from Kingsholm anyway. Still, it's good to see him all official-like.

Both Civics have a small claim to fame, this year. This is Terry Wathen's third term, which is very rare indeed. Additionally, it has now been officially confirmed that John Neary is the youngest Sheriff of Gloucester ever. So we have quite an unusual pair. In passing, it isn't generally known that the Mayor, in the days before his interest in boxing superseded, hooked occasionally for Coney Hill.

This year, the Civic visit is a bit special. Conscious that this is the Ground Centenary season, the Mayor and the Sheriff have decided to make a presentation to the Club. The form it will take is a bit of a secret, and although I know what it is, I shan't tell you, so there.

But presentation or no presentation, we are very happy that our two Civic Dignitaries could come along. From my own experience, I know what a horrendously fraught year a civic one can be, and it says something about the Club, the City, and the Civic Authorities that this visit has almost achieved the status of a tradition.

Welcome Gentlemen! Why not come along again, just for the crack, as they say, in your private capacities?

### GOT ANY OLD PICTURES?

I was approached with a plea from Cecil Pope, last Saturday. He has acquired the job of updating the honours boards, displaying the old team photographs, and various similar worthy endeavours over the close season, and has found the odd gap in our collection of team pictures.

Obviously, we have most of them, but the ones missing are for the years:

1980/81, 1981/82, 1982/83, 1986/87, and, incredibly, 1990/91.

If anyone, ex-player or relative, perhaps, can fill in any of these, Cecil Pope would be very pleased to hear from you. Photographs can obviously be copied and returned, if that's what you wish. You can contact Cecil by ringing Brimscombe 882099, or if you leave a message with Geraldine in the Office (381087), she'll pass it along.

### VICTORIAN VALUES

We have a young lady as our Match Mascot today. She's Victoria Mountjoy, and if she looks familiar, it wouldn't be surprising. You may have come across her giving her Dad, Dave, a hand with the players' kit, a job they have both been doing for yonks.

Not too many yonks in Victoria's case, of course, because she is only 9 years old. She attends Harewood Junior School, where she distinguishes herself on the Netball court, although she readily admits to be keen on all sports.

But there's more. She's also into ballet, tap-dancing and drama. Perhaps she should give our players a few lessons. A few histrionics can yield dividends when there's plenty in the offing.

Vicky has been waiting a long time for this, she was, in fact, down to do this job some time ago, but the weather intervened and her chance was temporarily lost.

Better late than never, and we're glad she has been able to make it after all.

## ONE FIRST CLASS TEAM SUPPORTING ANOTHER



**Lloyds  
Bank**

THE THOROUGHBRED BANK.



by  
**Peter Arnold**

#### **NO FRIEND OF MINE**

The presence of the Mayor and the Sheriff here today gives me an opportunity to put one particular record straight.

A while ago, a correspondent to the letters page of the 'Citizen' referred to 'Peter Arnold's friend, Terry Wathen'. I have news for you, Sir, Terry's no friend of mine. He's a relation.

## **BACK THEN**

#### **ROCKCLIFF? WHO'S ROCKCLIFF?**

You may well ask, to my discredit, I had never heard of them either, until looking through the Secretary's Notebook for the season 1897/8, I discovered that they had visited Kingsholm on April 8th, 1898, and drawn with Gloucester 8 points all.

There were one or two interesting points about that. To start with, Gloucester only lost three games that season, all to top Welsh opposition, and were justifiably claiming to be the English Champions. Yet a team which, with all the respect in the world, isn't the first one you think of, these days, had held the full side to a draw.

They had also attracted gate money of £76, which was as high as it had been all season. What's more, Rockcliff took half of it, which was unusual, so the visitors must have been well known and highly regarded.

Finally, April 8th, 1898 was Good Friday, a day when not many sides play these days, and they took their religion a little more seriously a century ago.

Further investigation seemed in order, and I rapidly found that the Rockcliff club still thrives, and has a pleasant ground in — wait for it — Whitley Bay.

Even nowadays, a trip to, say, Newcastle Gosforth, is seen as something of a major trek. Before the turn of the century, it must have been about like Gloucester's forthcoming visit to the USA, and the Rockcliff side's visit was obviously part of an Easter tour.

The next step was to contact the Rockcliff club itself, I did that, and found that their highly co-operative officials were far more aware of the event than I was, and actually had a photograph of the touring party hanging in their clubhouse. They also sent me a copy of their Centenary handbook, from which I discover that, in those days, Rockcliff was a decided power in the land, and that the side which came here could boast several Internationals.

The 1898 tour was one of a series which went on for about a decade. It was actually billed as a Welsh tour, and the game against Gloucester was a stop off on the way. They would come this far by train, and then join a char-a-banc which transported them around Wales. In the year in question, they drew with Gloucester, then went on to beat Newport the following day, and lose to Swansea on Easter Monday.

In fact, they didn't always have a game at Gloucester, but on the occasions when they didn't they would drop in and have team with us, which has a delightful old world air about it.

Gloucester Secretary Fred Lovesy was a bit miffed by the result. He remarks that, with Gloucester 5 points ahead, and not long to go, C. Cummins attempted to run the ball from behind the Gloucester line, dropped it, and allowed a Rockcliff player to touch down. The conversion duly went over, and the game was drawn.

Shades of Campese on the Lions Tour.



# TAILPIECE

by  
Peter Arnold

## THANKS ALL ROUND

With only one more home match for the senior side, this is the day when I should relay thanks to all the people, many of them unsung and unnoticed by the average supporter, who make the whole season possible, and contribute so greatly to the special atmosphere which is Kingsholm.

Just think about it. Someone has to prepare the pitch and keep it in the prime condition for which we are famous, and which was partially responsible for us staging a World Cup game this season.

Someone has to sweep up the debris after a game, indoors and out, and the advent of the hospitality boxes has extended that chore recently. Someone has to launder the kit, provide a meal for players and their opponents. Someone has to serve behind the bar, clear up the glasses, mop up the spilt beer, and generally attend the ills that an alcohol-serving establishment is heir to.

Someone has to man turnstiles, steward the ground, the stairs and the entrances, and sell you your programme. For that matter, someone has to get the programmes to the right places at the right time. Someone has to man the car park.

We also owe thanks to the doctors, the physiotherapy girls, the efficient ball boys, the chaps who man the scoreboards the fellow who makes the PA announcements, and the proverbial thousand-and-one other people who do things I have forgotten.

Let's not forget the members of the various committees, either. Often criticised, rarely praised, they give time week after week, often throughout the year, not just in the playing season. Most of us have slated the Selectors at times, for example, but by and large, they turn out some formidable teams at all levels, from Firsts to Colts.

Above all, we must thank the players. They are the stars, and the chaps who don't get half as much publicity. Week by week, they give us superb entertainment, and quite frankly, excellent value for our season tickets and gate money. They're up the sharp end, the people to whom all the complex organisation is geared. If they didn't deliver the goods, we might all just as well pack up and go home. And probably would.

You'll notice that I haven't mentioned a single name in this little piece. That's because I wouldn't want to pick anyone out from anyone else, from the Club President on down. Everyone contributes to one of the

finest clubs in Rugby Union Football, and I don't just mean on the field.

It's taken precisely one hundred years to get Kingsholm where it is now. We all have our opinions about how things could be improved, because nothing on this earth is perfect. But let's be grateful for what we've got. It's more than most people can point to.

## NOT QUITE OVER YET

We have Birkenhead Park on Monday, of course, and that should be a breath of fresh air after some of the stern occasions we've had lately. However, there is life at Kingsholm after Easter. While the First XV are tidying up their season at the Stoop, next Saturday, United are down to entertain London Irish.

We owe fervent congratulations to the United side for winning their Second Team League for the second year in succession. That's a considerable achievement, but what has been fascinating has been the manner in which they've done it. They've played some highly superior football, and their loyal bunch of regular supporters will bend your ear for ages about it.

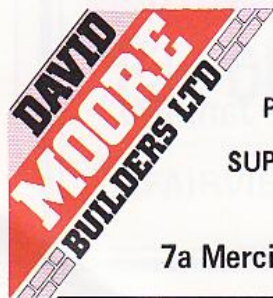
One should also remember that, almost by definition, United find it difficult to field a settled side. The inevitable injury, the necessity to rest First XV players, the occasional loss of form, representative calls, all mean that the senior side filch players, from time to time, and, by the nature of things, the promoted players tend to be the better ones. And some of the senior calls can arise very late, even on the morning of the match, which means that Team Secretary, Fred Reed, has to emulate the proverbial blue-fundamented fly finding someone to fill the gap. Which ain't always easy.

All in all, the United side do us proud. Wouldn't it be nice to show our appreciation by making sure they have a good crowd for their final match of the season?

## AND THAT'S NOT ALL

If your appetite for Rugby isn't satiated — and it's a long time 'til September — on Tuesday and Wednesday next, you could come along and see the North Gloucestershire Combination Cup Finals, which are always worth watching.

On the other hand, there's a very attractive-looking game here, just to round things off, on Wednesday, April 29th. The occasion is the Under 19 County Cup Finals, when the contenders are Lydney and Clifton. Colts Rugby is always a joy to behold, and I can't think of a better way to wind up the season.



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