

GLOUCESTER v WEST RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB HARTLEPOOL

SATURDAY
OCTOBER 31st, 1992
Kick Off 3.00 p.m.



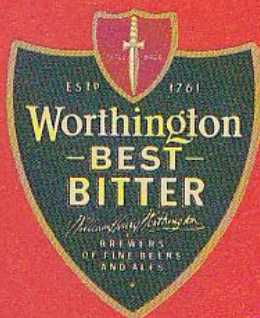
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Peter Arnold

RETURNING THE HOSPITALITY

Quite a few of us have been waiting for this match for some time. As far as I know, West Hartlepool have never visited Kingsholm before — Ed Martin will no doubt correct me if I'm wrong — but it isn't the first time the two clubs have ever met. Some years ago, Gloucester travelled to the Brierton Lane ground in the Pilkington Cup, and received a warm welcome in all senses of the phrase.

Indeed, that trip to the hitherto uncharted territory of the North East was one of the most pleasant rugby outings in which I have ever participated. At the time, it was the biggest game which the home side had ever hosted, and the carpet they laid out for us could not have been redder.

Our very welcome visitors will forgive me for mentioning that the town itself was firmly in the grip of the last (or last but one; I forget) recession. Shops, and even whole housing estates, were boarded up, and we couldn't even find one of the once-famed Geordie fish-and-chip shops. The scene was depressing for a trainload of Elver Eaters on pleasure bent.

But the welcome we received was as warm as I have ever experienced anywhere. And it started as soon as the train pulled into the station.

In fact, it was a bit off-putting at first. Right along the platform, at intervals of about five yards, were serried ranks of policemen, making sure that we weren't about to wreck the joint. On asking the Inspector in charge why the overkill police presence, he replied, reasonably enough, "We have had no experience of big rugby occasions, so we thought that the safe thing to do was to treat today the same way we would a big soccer match."

Which is a sad commentary on the state of the round-ball game at the time, but the Law rapidly found that Gloucester rugby supporters don't actually eat babies for breakfast, and had the good sense to back off rapidly, becoming just as friendly as the rest of the population. In fact, if memory serves, their numbers had been reduced to the odd strolling constable or two by the time we returned to the station.

On leaving British Rail premises, we were greeted by a fleet of double-decker buses which transported

us on the quarter-hour journey to Brierton Road with great efficiency and good humour. Once there, in contrast to the depressed state of the town centre, we found one of the most attractive small grounds you could wish to visit. The food was excellent, the beer copious, and the service rapid and cheerful. Although the clubhouse was soon bulging at the seams, everyone had an extremely pleasant pre-match session, and, to be frank, the welcome was much warmer than we have been known to receive at one or two more prestigious clubs. I believe we even got free programmes.

That's why I have been looking forward to today's visit. The good humour was just as evident even after Gloucester had, quite predictably, won the match, and if ever a side with officials and support, deserved a warm welcome from us, then it's West Hartlepool.

Of course, all that was a while ago, and things have changed since, West Hartlepool have gone from strength to strength since then, and now meet us on level terms in Courage League Division One. It would be fair to say that they have been finding things tough at the very top level, but that is an experience not uncommon among newly promoted clubs. It takes time to find one's feet in such circumstances, and the season is still young — let's face it, Gloucester would be in trouble if it weren't.

West Hartlepool have come up through the ranks the hard way, and they deserve all their success. It certainly wouldn't be safe for Gloucester to regard the result as a foregone conclusion. And I'm sure they won't.

But, whatever happens, today's visitors deserve a warm welcome from us. It would be nice to think that they can retain their First Division place, so that we can play them on a home-and-away basis next season. After all, we don't intend to be relegated do we?

THANKS TO PITT GODDEN & TAYLOR

Most weeks, if you walk into the lounge area of the clubhouse, you will be confronted by the massed ranks of the Pitt family, using their considerable combined experience and expertise to dissect last



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WISHES GLOUCESTER R.F.C ALL THE
BEST FOR THE 1992/1993 SEASON
AND WELCOMES ITS GUESTS
TO KINGSHOLM

Peter Arnold (cont.)

week's performance and analyse the prospects for the forthcoming festivities. Today, they'll be a bit depleted, because some of their number will undoubtedly be in the hospitality boxes helping accountancy firm Pitt Godden & Taylor sponsor this week's game.

Not that there's anything new about that. If I recall, the fledgeling company actually sponsored their first match before the company was officially doing business. But it does come as something of a surprise to realise that that was five years ago.

In that time, it wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that Pitt Godden & Taylor have become one of the most respected firms of chartered accountants in the City. Indeed, from beginnings which were seriously local, and which included looking after the financial affairs of one or two Gloucester players, the firm's reputation has now spread far and wide. They can claim clients as far afield as London, Cornwall, the North of England and even Scotland. And I'd take money that every town with a Pitt Godden & Taylor client also has a decent rugby club.

The firm knows where its roots are, however, as Martyn Pitt says in his very helpful notes, "We have no plans to become a massive conglomerate of faceless, pinstripe 'number crunchers'."

"It isn't any secret that many firms of accountants have been feeling the cold chill of recession. Tales of redundancies and cut-backs are rife, and it is heartening that Pitt Godden & Taylor are managing to buck the current trend, and are continuing to do well."

"As in most areas of business, it is a case of survival of the fittest; we play to our strengths, and are doing our utmost to help our clients weather the current storms. At the end of the day, our success depends on that of our clients."

Those clients are a pretty diverse bunch. They range from local shopkeepers through firms with multi-million pound turnovers. That means that Pitt Godden & Taylor must have specialists to cope with most eventualities.

To quote Martyn Pitt again, "We may not yet be out of recession, but Pitt Godden & Taylor are certainly playing their part in helping the local economy ride its way through it."

And they're not doing a bad job for Gloucester RFC either. We thank them most sincerely for their continuing support, and hope to see them every season for another five years, at the very least. Thanks, chaps, and have a very good day.

ENTER ALEX!

Apparently, the Liverpudlian phrase for 'over the moon' is 'made up', these days. I only know that because Alex Benbow's dad, Bob, says that that is how his 11-year-old son is at being chosen to be this week's Match Mascot.

Bob comes from the Liverpool area, and his wife Aldina is Portugese. Between them, they manage the Bell and Gavel Inn at Gloucester Cattle Market. The way qualification seems to go these days, that seems to indicate that young Alex, in the fullness of time, could play for Liverpool St. Helens, Gloucester and even Portugal.

He might do just that. He's a rugby fanatic, who has been supporting Gloucester since he was four years old, and is already working his way through the ranks of the fine old All Blues club, which has always been an excellent nursery for players up to and including British Lions standard.

When not throwing rugby balls around, Alex attends St. Peter's High School — Dave Pointon territory, I believe — and is also a cricketer. He is also into music and computers, so we have an all-rounder.

We certainly hope he enjoys his moment of fame today, and that he ignores his other potential qualifications and keeps his allegiance firmly with Gloucester.

GIVE TREVOR A CHANCE!

The ever-amiable Trevor Pritchard is perfectly happy to arrange supporters' coaches for important away games — indeed, the club wouldn't be the same without 'Trevor's Tours', but there are limits to what we can expect from the bloke.

He rang me the other day, much more in sorrow than in anger, asking if I would pen a little note asking everyone not to expect him to conjure up seats on coaches as late as the day before the trip. He also takes a somewhat jaundiced view of people ringing him up at all hours, at home on the same subject.

What all this amounts to is that Trevor is usually available at the Clubhouse over weekends, and he would be very grateful if people wanting to join coaches would make their wishes known to him on the Saturday before the match in question, or if that's not possible, ring the office to make enquiries early in the ensuing week. After all, if there is a big demand for an important game, then it's usually possible to arrange extra coaches — but that, too, takes time to arrange.

The point will probably not arise now until after Christmas, but you would do Mr. Pritchard a favour if you were to bear it in mind the next time you decide to go on safari. He does do his best, but he can't work miracles.

(cont. on page 8)

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WHO'S DOING WHAT (and to whom)

Club Officials and Committee Members for 1992/3 are as follows:

President: Canon Mervyn Hughes.

Vice Presidents: Tom Day, Gordon Hudson, Roy 'Digger' Morris.

Chairman: Peter Ford.

Hon. Secretary and Treasurer: Doug Wadley, 'Byeways', Belmont Avenue, Hucclecote, Tel: 617202 — but please note, Doug is 'in residence' in the Office at the Ground from 9.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m. every Monday to Friday throughout the Season. Tel: 381087.

Hon. Fixtures Secretary: Mike Nicholls, 90, Kingsholm Road. Tel: 301879.

Hon. Team Secretary: Eric Stephens, 1, Court Gardens, Hempsted. Tel: 529000.

Chairman of Selectors: Mickey Booth, 5, Insley Gardens, Hucclecote.

Hon. Colts Secretary: Reg Collins, 11, Gilpin Avenue, Hucclecote. Tel: 614335.

Committee: John Beaman, Mickey Booth, Alan Brinn, Bob Clewes, Terry Close, Mervyn Elway, David Foyle, Jim Holder, Brian Howells, Richard Jardine, Jim Jarrett, Andy Mitchell, Cecil Pope, Trevor Pritchard, Eric Stephens, Alan Townsend.

Players Representative: Jeremy Bennett.

Captains: First XV: Ian Smith. United: Andrew Stanley.

Coach: Keith Richardson.

... **And I nearly forgot:** Programme editor, Peter Arnold, 74, Victoria Street. Tel: 380481, who welcomes news, stories, anecdotes from any supporter, from Gloucester or Opponents. Although the laws of libel or obscenity may deter him from printing them.

Peter Arnold (cont.)

From here on in, I'll try to keep supporters informed about coach seat availability via our Clubcall telephone line. Just in case you haven't had the number tattooed on your wrist yet, it's 0898-121-138.

TRANSVAAL

Next Monday, as ever was, tickets for the game against Transvaal on Friday, November 13th, go on general sale at the office. So if you're a Member and haven't yet got your tickets, then you've missed your preferential fortnight, and will have to take your chances with everyone else.

Stand tickets cost £8.00 and Ground £4.00, with ground admission for Seniors and Juniors at £2.00. You can get yours by calling into the office between 10.00 am and 2.00 pm, any weekday. Or you could write in, enclosing the appropriate remittance and SAE.

Or, as you've seen in the Press, no doubt, there's another deal which might interest you. For just £20.00 you can watch the game from the Sportsman's Restaurant in the Hospitality Suite at the Dean's Walk end. The highly attractive package includes a special GRFC presentation wallet, a full buffet supper (I've tried it before, Egon Ronay — eat your heart out), a guaranteed balcony seat, and a cash bar open throughout the proceedings. Personally, I think that's excellent value, turning a trip to a most unusually attractive game into a memorable evening out. (cont. on page 9)

NOBBY'S NEWSDESK



Hello Everyone,

Last week's draw produced two landmarks for the Gold Bond:

Firstly on Monday, 26th October, 1992, Mr. F. Hook, of Churchdown, became our 500th winner, and secondly on Thursday, 29th October, we sent a cheque to Seymour News in Tuffley which took us through the £35,000 barrier in prize money.

Now £35,000 is a lot of money, but it is still only a small percentage of what the Gold Bond will be paying out as the membership of the Lottery increases. The number of people in the scheme has increased steadily throughout the start of the season, but there is still room for plenty more so JOIN US NOW AND BUY THE BOND!!!!

NOBBY

Always room for more Gold Bond Agents and Members. Find out how you can help the Club, and make a little money too, by contacting Andrew Benzie on Gloucester 419666



Peter Arnold (cont.)

If you're interested, ring Gloucester 419666. The efficient young ladies there will be delighted to answer any queries and satisfy your requirements.

Having said all that, I ought to point out that this is not an all-ticket match. If you like to take a chance on turning up and hoping to get in, then that's up to you. The idea is to relieve pressure on the turnstiles and get everyone into the ground as efficiently as possible. Knowing how quickly the tickets are going, however, I think you'd be well advised to gear yourself up accordingly. I'd hate to see a good, loyal supporter turning up and finding there's no room for him.

I have also been asked about any effect which the withdrawal of support from the Springbok tour by a couple of anti-apartheid bodies might have on our Transvaal game.

The answer is that, at the time of writing we simply don't know. If you want my own personal opinion, and without getting into the 'politics in sport' controversy, I would think that problems with the National side shouldn't be allowed to influence the Transvaal tour.

After all, what we have here is a private tour, unconnected with the national scene, except insofar as it is timed to allow the Transvaal party to support their international side. Surely they have a perfect right to tour if they want to.

Anyway, it would be a great shame if an English side which, in Derek Morgan, has had a valued and loyal black player as an integral member of the side for years should suffer through political events on another continent.

We can but await events, but personally, I'm optimistic.

FIREWORKS!

We had a letter, a while ago, from a Mr. Love of the Department of Trade and Industry. No, Michael Heseltine isn't reviewing our economic viability, it's simply that firework night is approaching, and DTI are asking all major sports clubs to remind people about firework safety. Apparently, the pundits who study these things believe that our crowd has the right cross-section of age groups to make such a plea worthwhile in the programme.

I'm happy to do that, although we don't have much to do with fireworks. Why, we haven't even burned a referee in effigy for weeks now.

Nevertheless, a point does arise. If anyone, youngster or otherwise, has seen fit to bring a pocketful of bangers along with him today, then I earnestly advise him to keep them firmly to himself.

Throwing fireworks about in crowds is a damned silly thing to do, and if anyone is tempted to indulge in such a dangerous practice, then he'll find his fireworks heaved out of the ground, with himself following closely behind. And he won't get in again.

I don't honestly think that any of our supporters are quite so stupid, but a word of warning doesn't come amiss does it? And do watch your step next Thursday. Keep the pets indoors and observe the Firework Code, copies of which are packed in most firework boxes. *(cont. on page 28)*

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or write for full colour brochure "Entertaining at Kingsholm" to Bastion House, Brunswick Road, Gloucester, GL1 1JJ.

Ed Martin

A visit to Kingsholm by a club from the North East (north of Yorkshire) is a rare occurrence. While today marks the first time that West Hartlepool has played here, it is only the ninth match when Gloucester has taken on "Geordie" opposition.

It is, however, more than likely that West Hartlepool passed through Gloucester around Christmas 1891. The club tried to get a Kingsholm date in the first season of the ground as part of a tour to these parts. And there is a reference in the Citizen during the summer of 1891 that it was hoped a club from the North East would take on Gloucester.

For reasons that have not survived the past century, the match at Kingsholm never became a reality. But West Hartlepool staged through Gloucester on their way to the Arms Park and an 18-0 loss to Cardiff on December 19th (the scoreline given is by Welsh calculation — Wales apparently had not adopted the then new points scoring system, and West Hartlepool records could well show a 17-0 loss!

The first visit by a North Eastern club to Kingsholm was on Tuesday, April 4th, 1893. And it was the "star" attraction of an "invasion from the north" Easter holiday programme (Broughton Rangers visited on Saturday and Tydsley — also from the Lancashire Union — played on Bank Holiday Monday).

A measure of the importance of the visit of Hartlepool Rovers was the fact that the Citizen deemed it to be in their commercial interests to bring out a "Special Edition" containing a full match report.

"This, the most important of the programme entered into by the Gloucester fifteen during the Easter holidays, was played at Kingsholm before a fair company of spectators," the Citizen started its report.

"The Rovers have this season many times distinguished themselves. For an idea of their prowess one need only refer to their two last fixtures — Newport and the Barbarians."

Gloucester made two changes in the threequarters — H. Bartlett came in for W. Jackson and Hubert George's place was taken by E. Fenner, a first team player from Bristol "borrowed" for the occasion. Gloucester were without the services of forward F. O.

Poole who was on duty with the Barbarians for their Easter programme.

Hartlepool Rovers included the international centre F. Alderson in their ranks. And it was Alderson who opened the scoring with "a splendid try" to give the visitors a 2-0 edge at the break.

The visitors looked set to post a win, but with only a few minutes left, C. J. Click scored a try when he "ran over in the corner amidst loud cheers." Full back A. F. Hughes missed with the shot for goal — and the game ended a 2-2 tie. "An interesting game (that) ended in an even draw," the Citizen reported.

Rockcliff from Whitley Bay were the next club to visit — they played here as part of the Easter programme in 1898. And again, there was deadlock, the game ending in an 8-8 tie. But when the club returned in the spring of 1901, Gloucester posted a 14-3 win.

April 13th, 1906, brought Hartlepool Old Boys (no longer playing and not to be confused with Hartlepool Boys Brigade Old Boys founded in 1925 or West Hartlepool Technical Day School OB founded in 1953) to Kingsholm, Gloucester winning 37-3. A year later Percy Park from North Shields visited (49-5 to Gloucester).

There was then a gap until the spring of 1925 when Northern came down (18-3 to Gloucester). Two years later, Northern were beaten 31-9 — and the game was the last time a club from the North East played at Kingsholm until Gosforth were beaten 19-6 in the John Player Cup on February 25th, 1977.

As the record below shows, Gloucester is unbeaten at Kingsholm by clubs from the North East.

COMPLETE KINGSHOLM RECORD vs NORTH EAST CLUBS

	P	W	L	D	PF	PA
Gosforth	1	1	0	0	19	6
Hartlepool OB	1	1	0	0	37	3
Hartlepool Rvs	1	0	0	1	2	2
Northern	2	2	0	0	49	12
Percy Park	1	1	0	0	49	5
Rockcliff	2	1	0	1	22	11
Overall	8	6	0	2	178	39

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Peter Arnold (cont.)

GREAT TIME HAD BY ALL

I wasn't able to get along myself, but I'm told that the visit of the famous Ystradgynlais Male Voice Choir to Kingsholm on Friday, October 16th, was a great success. You may remember that they repaired here after their prestigious Cathedral concert in aid of the Whitminster Animal Shelter.

Everyone, singers included, had a splendid time, and I'm asked to convey the thanks of the Choir to all for the warm welcome and appreciation they received.

Think nothing of it, boyos. We've always liked a good sing at Kingsholm.

HIS WORSHIP'S ONE OF US

I've had occasion, recently, to foregather with the current Mayor of Gloucester, Councillor Ben Richards of Longlevens. He fits right in at Kingsholm.

It's quite amazing how many Mayors of Gloucester turn out to be devout and practising rugby men. In fact, I can only think of a meagre handful, over the past couple of decades, who don't fit that description. I was therefore gratified to discover that Councillor Richards, although not a native of Gloucester, continues that tradition.

I say 'His Worship's one of us', but that isn't in fact quite true. He's a Cornishman, bred of good fishermen stock, and brought up in the rugby tradition. We, here in Gloucestershire, have always had great respect for our Cornish bretheren, regarding them like Oscar Wilde's Liberals 'at least they come after dinner'.

On departing his native heath, our Mayor attended St. Luke's College, of happy memory, and, he tells me, propped for them, so he's played to a fair standard in his day.

He gives me permission to say that he hopes an official visit to Kingsholm won't be too long delayed. On speaking of the matter to his secretary, the indefatigable Anne Herbert, her reaction was "Just you try and keep him away!" Which is all very reassuring.

We look forward to making his better acquaintance.

LINESMEN

Just as we attempted some explanation of the new Laws at the beginning of the season, so we are requested by the Rugby Football Union to publicise the duties of linesmen in this day and age. So here are some of the more salient points.

To start with, we don't call them linesmen —

they're 'Touch Judges', but a rose by any other name

Apparently, it's up to the referee to introduce the Touch Judges to the two captains, and inform them that the Touch Judges will be assisting him on the Law on foul play. If the ref. doesn't want to, he can instruct the Touch Judges to inspect studs before the game. Just so long as someone inspects them.

The instructions on how to handle flags are meticulous and minute. For example, when a Touch Judge wants to attract the referee's attention to an incident of foul play, he must 'hold the flag to the left side at all times.' On such occasions, he should raise his flag and wave it immediately he sees an offence, even if he doesn't know who committed it. Once he is sure that the ref. has seen the flag, he must hold it horizontally above his head with the left hand, while holding the fabric of the flag with his right hand (!).

There are some interesting points of which, I'll bet, most of us weren't aware. For example, at a kick-off, the judge on the side not expecting to receive the ball should take up a position on the 22-metre line. That way, he can see if the ball has crossed the goal-line.

The touch judge can also have an influence on the vexed question of whether the props have pulled each other down or not, notably, if it happens on the far side of the scrum from the referee. If he considers that this has happened, he is instructed to stand with his flag positioned across his chest, thus tipping the ref. off — although if the referee has an alternative suggestion, he can apply it beforehand.

Another tricky situation is the one where several players are involved when the ball crosses the goal-line. If the touch judge considers that a try has been scored, he shouldn't immediately run off behind the posts, but wait until the ref. has signalled the try.

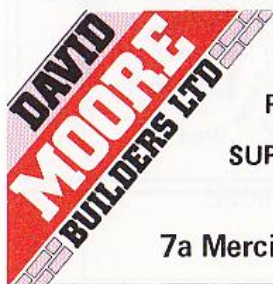
Again, the ref. can get some help from the touch judges in this situation. One suggestion is that the judge should position himself one metre into the in-goal area if he considers the try is good, and one metre towards the 22 if he doesn't. So at least we should be able to tell if the touch judge thinks a try has been scored.

There are quite a few more rules along these lines. No room now, but I'll return to the subject on some future occasion.

TAILPIECE

The other week, I asked Dino Phillips how he qualifies for the Welsh Development squad. "I own a corgi" he said.

Actually, the Gloucester front row is beginning to sound like the opening of an old joke: 'There was an Englishman, a Scotsman and a Welshman . . . ' All with good Glawster accents.



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