

NEWCASTLE GOSFORTH

R.F.C



PROGRAMME

1992-93

Main Sponsor



**REED
PRINT &
DESIGN**

NEWCASTLE GOSFORTH

Green and White

15	I CHANDLER
14	T PENN
13	R WILKINSON
12	A CAMPBELL
11	M WHITE
10	D JOHNSON
9	S DOUGLAS
1	R FULLER
2	(Capt) N FRANKLAND
3	J CURRY
4	T ROBERTS
5	S GIBBS
6	G CLARK
7	P SMITH
8	A MEADOWS
16	M BEATTIE
17	F MITCHELL

REFEREE
MR A TURNER
(Manchester Dist. Society)
TOUCH JUDGES
MR J N CARSWELL
(Durham Society)
MR W LOWE
(Yorkshire Society)

NEXT HOME GAME
STOCKTON
WEDNESDAY 2nd DEC
KO 7.30pm

GILBERT MATCHBALL

Sponsored by
REED PRINT
& DESIGN

GLOUCESTER

Cherry and White

M ROBERTS	15
D MORGAN	14
S MORRIS	13
D CASKIE	12
J PERRINS	11
N MATTHEWS	10
D CUMMINS	9
T WINDO	1
D KEARSEY	2
A DEACON	3
D SIMS	4
R WEST	5
P ASHMEAD	6
A STANLEY (Capt)	7
P MILES	8
I MORGAN	16
J HAWKER	17

The GODFATHER column

Having reached 'half term' in the league, we turn our attention this afternoon to the Pilkington Cup with a tie against first division Gloucester. It is barely three years since we last met in the competition, Gloucester triumphing 27-15 at Gateshead International Stadium. In spite of the defeat, our courageous performance that day was one of the few high spots of our miserable season in exile at Percy Park. Gloucester at that time were challenging Bath for the league title and went all the way to the final of the cup before going down heavily to their great West Country rivals. Times have changed since then, however. We have gone from strength to strength whilst our visitors are having an uncharacteristically difficult season. A trickle of retirements and defections turned into a positive torrent in the summer months leaving Geordie coach Keith Richardson with just a handful of the players that have led their challenge for honours. With four defeats in six games they perch precariously on the relegation precipice whilst their Kingsholm fortress has been breached by, of all people, West Hartlepool. Their cause will not have been helped by the injury to scrum half Marcus Hannaford or the likely absence on 'international' duty of their skipper Ian Smith. Nevertheless, they are a first division side and should be bolstered by their emphatic victory over Saracens last Saturday and recent wins against Pontypool, Moseley and Transvaal.

For our part, the pressure is off after the recent spate of league games. Although a cup run would be very welcome – especially to our treasurer – our priority this season is promotion and the cup must not be allowed to distract us from that course. With a seven week break from league action we can look back on the first half of our programme with considerable satisfaction. Having seen off our three main rivals we almost faltered at Blackheath before returning to winning ways against Coventry and Morley. These latter two victories are particularly meritorious when one considers that we have had to make do without influential forwards Steve Bainbridge, Richard Arnold and Paul Thompson. Veterans Terry Roberts and Jon Curry have stepped into the breach and proved a revelation. Although we remain basically a young side, the average age of our try scorers last Saturday was 35, remarkable when you consider that 21 year old Steven Douglas was one of them! We must now guard against complacency having appeared to have overcome the hard part. There will be no easy games with our remaining opponents scrambling for the points which will enable them to beat the drop.

Whilst the first team are unbeaten on English soil this season, the Greyhounds and Under 21's have faltered in recent weeks. The Greyhounds have lost their last three games – the management team must be anticipating the board's dreaded vote of confidence. The Under 21's meanwhile were well beaten in their cup final a fortnight ago and, perhaps still in shock, failed to fulfil their fixture at Morley. There are, however, encouraging stirrings from the recently resurrected Colts. A confidence boosting victory over Durham City has been followed by two narrow defeats against senior opposition. Your writer travelled with them to the Vale of Lune a fortnight ago and was impressed by their enthusiasm and general demeanour. Many of their players are new to us but they have fast become a credit to the club. That they are playing at all is due entirely to the dedication of Malcolm Stokoe who has done a fantastic job with limited resources and precious little help.

This afternoon's cup tie should attract the attention of the local media. One hopes that by attending the game the BBC will be able to get the score right after the apoplexy they caused last Saturday. Northern may not have had much to cheer this season but news of our apparent demise raised the roof at McCracken Park whilst rumour has it that West Hartlepool did not appear unduly distressed. The BBC were not the only ones to get it wrong. The Sunday Sun carried a report with the correct scoreline but on the same page printed a league table which showed that we had lost 3-13!

On a more positive note, our successful start to the season has certainly raised our media profile with at least two very positive features appearing in the broadsheets. Its not just the players who have been receiving the plaudits however, our pitch has received a lot of favourable comment and will surely come into its own this afternoon. After playing last Saturday on a paddy field, during a monsoon in sub zero temperatures, our players will be delighted to return to their Kingston Park carpet.

Godfather today was Kingsley Hyland.

The views expressed in this column are those of its writer and not necessarily of the Board of Management.

From the Director's Chair

Newcastle Gosforth members and supporters can have little to complain about at the moment. The 1992/93 league campaign has reached the half way point and the club is well on course to achieve its ambition, promotion to Division One. We have had our hiccups along the way and more than our fair share of injuries; but have managed a 100% record. This has been achieved without the team showing the form of last season, which hopefully will come in the second half of the campaign.

By January 9th which is our next league game against Wakefield injuries should have cleared up and the squad strengthened, putting us in a strong position for the last six games.

Last week against Morley the BBC reported a defeat, something which no doubt caused a few flutters and perhaps a few chuckles. Needless to say, 'the report of our death was greatly exaggerated'. Overcoming the first determined efforts of Morley and the conditions proved difficult; but the end result was highly satisfying and scoring 36 points was almost a miracle.

We entertain Gloucester today in the glamour competition of the English season. They, like us, are troubled by injuries but always play tough determined rugby. Coached by Keith Richardson, 'a Geordie', Gloucester have overcome a poor start to the league season and are now beginning to show the form which will lift them out of relegation trouble.

Today however promotion and relegation are a side issue and we can get absorbed in the special atmosphere of the cup. Previous encounters leave Gloucester 2-1 ahead, a levelling up of that score would be welcome.

M W Mahoney
Director of Rugby