

Championships

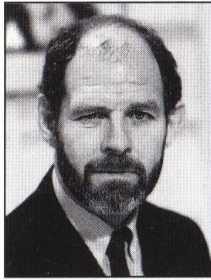
**1992/93 COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP
DEVON v GLOUCESTERSHIRE**

**Saturday, December 5th, 1992
Pottington Road, Barnstaple
2.30 p.m.**

**ADT Sponsors of English Rugby
at Divisional, County and Under 21 level**

OFFICIAL PROGRAMME





COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP 1971

By John Taylor *Rugby Correspondent, Mail On Sunday*

Now that the statutory twenty years have elapsed, the top secret file on how Surrey won the County Championship in 1971 can be released to the public.

Many great rugby brains have pondered unsuccessfully on how that incredible leader of men, Bob Hiller, welded a multi-national assortment of deadly rivals, who for various reasons found themselves living in South London, into a team prepared to give everything for this strange conglomeration called Surrey. To most of us it was not even a postal address. We can now admit it: losing one's amateur status does not have the same terror about it when you are nearing fifty. The secret was simple – bribery. No, this is not another boot money scandal hitting at the heart of the English establishment: in the days when 'diet' was something only obese people bothered about Surrey won on the very best fillet steak and the finest claret.

The disparate band of Celts (plus a few token Englishmen) who found themselves in transit in what the RFU deemed to be Surrey at that time, were welded into a formidable fighting unit by the hospitality of the Surrey Committee. They were led by the likes of David Brooks, who proved he knew a thing or two about socialising when managing the 1968 Lions tour, and a young (relatively speaking) team secretary called Dudley Wood.

They wined and dined us to success. Those slap-up dinners at a posh Richmond steak house, long since deceased, were all it took in those days. None of us could normally afford to eat at such a place and to our naive palates those meals were the gastronomic highlights of the year.

As the evenings wore on, hostilities between the Welsh, Scots and Irish – there was not an Englishman, let alone a native of Surrey, in the pack until the final when injuries forced out Ken Kennedy and Al Moroney – dissolved in a rosy haze and a unique social bond was forged.

It was often a problem to get time off for the Wednesday afternoon preliminary round games, but meetings were cancelled, deals delayed, books left unstudied and pupils neglected for those sumptuous feasts. I remember one evening concluding at an Esher mansion, with one particularly aged alicadoo proudly displaying a bottle of port his father had laid down for him on the day he was born. Needless to say it did not last the evening – the old gentleman was gently persuaded that it would be a crime if he were to die without tasting it.

For all our 'allegiance' we still expected a roasting when we found we had to play Gloucestershire in the Final at Kingsholm; there was no neutral Twickenham in those days. Waiting for us was a packed house of fanatics

who had widened their allegiance for the day to include shire as well as town – it was easy because the team was almost identical. The intimidation began as soon as we went out to inspect the pitch an hour before kick-off, but fortunately they went too far. The abuse we could take, but when a tiny section of supporters who had obviously lunched long and hard in the local decided to use us as spittoons it was better than any team talk.

Our gallant captain concentrated on the President's promise of a meal to beat all meals when he gave his pre-match oration and poor Gloucestershire stood no chance. Renowned trenchermen such as Mike Roberts, Mervyn Davies and Ali McHarg could taste red meat and we won with plenty to spare.

But even then the Surrey phenomenon was very much the exception. As now the real loyalty to County rugby was in the North and the West. At that time we were playing the 'fourth system'; now we are on the sixth and there are further changes planned for next year when players in the top two divisions of the club leagues will no longer be eligible for selection.

Some people see that as a further erosion of the once proud position the County Championship commanded in the English game. I believe it will have the opposite effect.

People have been forecasting a creeping death for the competition ever since I can remember and it has certainly struggled for a meaningful identity as the senior clubs have become more powerful. It has been undermined by the inconsistency of support, with top players in some counties making themselves available and others not.

Now there is a clear directive. The elite will not be involved but the rest will be expected to participate. It will be their chance to show they can impress at a representative level.

No other county will be able to match the fervour of the Cornish fans – let's face it they believe they are a separate nation – but if there is no

conflict of interest there is still enormous loyalty to many counties.

And even those like Surrey have now started to build from the bottom instead of relying on temporary foreign import. It would have spoiled our fun but I believe it is the right way to go.



Back Row (left to right): J. B. WILLIAMSON (Touch Judge) : B. RUSSEL : R. H. LLOYD : T. M. DAVIES : T. G. EVANS : M. G. ROBERTS : N. P. HINTON : R. C. CUNIS : C. T. GIBBONS : Front Row: N. C. STARMER-SMITH : I. D. WRIGHT : J. TAYLOR : R. HILLER (Capt.) : A. F. McHARG : J. M. NOVAK : A. M. PHILLIPS : Absent: D. S. BOYLE : K. W. KENNEDY : A. L. MORONEY : T. J. BROOKE



DEVON v GLOUCESTERSHIRE

5th December 1992

Good afternoon Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is indeed my pleasure and privilege to welcome here today the President of Gloucestershire, his officers, committee, players and supporters. I trust everyone will enjoy the well known North Devon hospitality.

Today it is also my pleasure to welcome at a pre-match Buffet, provided by the Barnstaple R.F.C., our old and new County Members. This promises to be a great success, anyone feeling they are being left out please contact Gillian Hoggus or Frank Webb who will provide the necessary Application Forms.

To all the players. Have a great game, thoroughly enjoy the whole day with a kind thought for the Referee and Touch Judges who I am sure will make it a success.

Finally our thanks to the Barnstaple R.F.C. for the use of their excellent facilities and to the ladies of providing the after match Dinner/Bufferet, etc.

Have a Great Day.

REGGIE

DEVON

GREEN AND WHITE HOOP JERSEYS; WHITE SHORTS

- 15 **G. SLOMAN** (Barnstaple)
14 **L. BRAILEY** (Barnstaple)
13 **N. LEONARD** (Exeter) CAPTAIN
12 **J. MEAKIN** (Devon & Cornwall Police)
11 **S. FIELD** (Barnstaple)
10 **P. BERZIN** (Torquay Athletic)
9 **S. KENCH** (Plymouth Albion)
1 **S. COLEMAN** (Plymouth Albion)
2 **R. CRUSE** (Tiverton)
3 **A. DENNIS** (Okehampton)
4 **A. GUBB** (Barnstaple)
5 **I. HARRISON** (Plymouth Albion)
6 **L. STRATTON** (Exeter)
7 **R. SIMMONDS** (Teignmouth)
8 **P. WHITE** (Brixham)

Replacements:

- 16 **J. Chugg** (Barnstaple)
17 **T. Priest** (Bideford)

Referee:
Laurie Prideaux
(Cornwall Society)

- FULL-BACK
THREE-QUARTERS
RIGHT-WING
CENTRE
CENTRE
LEFT-WING
HALF-BACKS
STAND-OFF
SCRUM-HALF
FORWARDS
PROP
HOOKER
PROP
LOCK
LOCK
FLANKER
FLANKER
No. 8

Touch Judges:

Tony Pomeroy (Cornwall Society)
Peter Highfield (Goucs/Bristol Society)
KICK-OFF 2.30 p.m.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

RED JERSEYS; WHITE SHORTS

- 15 **TIM SMITH** (Gloucester)
14 **DERRICK MORGAN** (Gloucester)
13 **BEN MASLIN** (Bristol University)
12 **LEE OSBORNE** (Berry Hill)
11 **ANDY WILLIAMS** (Bristol)
10 **MIKE HAMLIN** (London Welsh) CAPTAIN
9 **RICHARD REES** (Northampton)
1 **ADEY POWLES** (Berry Hill)
2 **STEVE RATCLIFFE** (Cheltenham)
3 **SIMON BALDWIN** (Gloucester O.B.)
4 **NIGEL SCRIVENS** (London Welsh)
5 **CHRIS BLAKE** (Clifton)
6 **IAN PATTEN** (Bristol)
7 **RODERI LEWIS** (Lydney)
8 **JULIAN HORRABIN** (Berry Hill)

Replacements:

- 16 **Jeff Power** (Berry Hill)
17

ADT PROMOTING ENGLAND RUGBY

The Rugby Football Union is delighted to acknowledge the generous sponsorship of ADT in supporting the Divisional and County Championships during the 1992/93 season.

Rugby Union in England is on a high and at a time when the representative, élite end of the game at National, Divisional, County and Club League levels is in such excellent health and when the England Double Grand Slam team in 1991 and 1992 is playing such exciting, breathtaking Rugby Union, the game continues to be faced with significant challenges at grass roots level.

Following the huge and significant impact of the Rugby World Cup in 1991, the 1992/93 season finds Rugby Union in England addressing these familiar challenges:

- The fundamental changes taking place in state school physical education and games programmes which dictate that the RFU and affiliated clubs teach the game to the next generation of players. The ongoing ramifications of the Education Reform Act and in particular of the implementation of the National Curriculum demand that the RFU and affiliated counties, clubs and schools continue to adapt to the changes embodied in this legislation.
- The 'demographic time bomb' caused by the falling birth rate will result in a 20 per cent average reduction in school leavers (aged 16-19) during the 1990s. Rugby clubs will have fewer recruits unless they act now and formulate promotional and recruitment strategies and implement development plans.
- Competition between 170 or so governing bodies of sport to attract youngsters to their sport; the number of recreation and leisure options has increased dramatically in the past decade.

Clubs affiliated to the Rugby Football Union have been advised to construct and implement development plans which include promotional activities, recruitment strategies and much improved public and press relations. School liaison video tapes entitled 'Running Rugby' and 'Back to the Future' are available free as resources to clubs. A Club prospectus, incorporating a Five Year Development Plan, has been produced and a School Liaison Manual is also available. Many clubs have been identified as models of good practice and their promotional resources such as posters, pamphlets and leaflets can be obtained from the RFU Technical Staff and Youth Development Officers.

The Rugby Football Union also recognises the need to train more teachers and coaches who will introduce the game to youngsters and will be involved in player development programmes. More than 19,000 new coaches, mainly

at Start Rugby and Preliminary Award levels, have been trained during 1990-91.

The Junior Referees Award is being promoted throughout the country to help stimulate an interest in refereeing, particularly at the grass roots, New Image Rugby and Mini Rugby end of the game.

The XV Days of England Rugby initiative which took place during September 1992 was designed to encourage counties, clubs and schools to organise recruitment and promotional events at the start of the 1992/93 season to follow up the huge increase in levels of participation and of community and educational interest generated by the Rugby World Cup 1991 and the Double Grand Slams in 1991 and 1992. Recent England Rugby Roadshow initiatives have helped to maintain an increase in levels of participation in many areas and the magnificent work done by the RFU Youth Development Officers, of whom there are now 36, will help to ensure that young recruits to the game retain their interest and develop as players.

The England players, as part of the 'Run with the Ball' campaign, have helped to run and staff a series of England Rugby Camps throughout the country during September 1992, providing an inspirational lead to promising young players and high profile press/media exposure at local level. The RFU is extremely grateful to the England players for the way they are providing such an excellent role model for the future generation of players.

The ADT Divisional and County Championship's matches will produce some sparkling rugby and it is expected that Divisions and Counties will grasp the opportunity to promote the game on the occasion of the Divisional and County matches. For example, youngsters will be invited to play in curtain-raiser activities before the main matches and school and club mini players will be invited to attend matches as guests of ADT Divisions and Counties.

The RFU Promotional Day will take place this season at Twickenham on Saturday, 17th April, 1992, the occasion of the ADT County and Under 21 County Championships Finals. The RFU/ADT Promotional days in 1991 and 1992 were a huge success and we hope that youngsters and their families will use the opportunity in April 1993 to pay a visit to the RFU HQ at Twickenham.

The Rugby Football Union thank ADT and the many helpers who promote and develop rugby union throughout the country. We hope for continued excellence in the Divisional and County matches with significant promotional opportunities being developed in parallel.



ALAN BLACK

National Promotions Officer, Rugby Football Union