

# GLOUCESTER v HARLEQUINS

RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

SATURDAY

APRIL 24th 1993

Kick off 3.00 p.m.



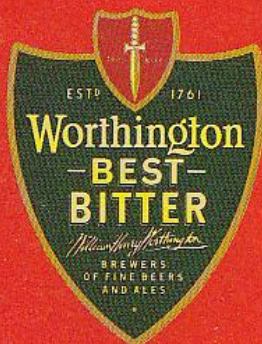
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## *Peter Arnold* WHAT DO YOU THINK OF IT SO FAR?

It's been a funny old season, hasn't it? And if past experience is any criterion could carry on being funny and old right up until around 4.30 this afternoon. For example, the last time Harlequins came here for the last match of the season, Gloucester won at least 70 minutes of the match. The only trouble was that today's distinguished and very welcome visitors had scored two converted tries in the preceding ten minutes, and you don't give an outfit like 'Quins a twelve-point start (as it was then) and expect to get away with it.

Similarly, last season, Gloucester were winning handily enough at the Stoop, when Harlequins had a man sent off. At that point, they decided that valour was the better part of discretion, ran everything from everywhere, and achieved a famous victory. So isn't it about our turn to canter into the winner's enclosure?

'Quins are always likely to pull something out of the bag. For some seasons now, they have paced themselves throughout the season, often starting with some unlooked-for defeats, but always coming good after Christmas. Consequently, no side has a better Pilkington Cup reputation than Harlequins, and they've justified it again this year. We wish them well in next week's endeavour, remembering how desperately close they came to beating Bath last season, a feeling we know well, having also seen Bath snatch the game in extra time in the previous round.

I think it's only right, too, to mention a couple of Harlequins who we shan't be seeing next season, because they have decided to hang up their very considerable boots. At the time of writing, I don't know if either skipper Peter Winterbottom or winger Andrew Harriman are down to play today, or if either of them has made the trip just for the ride. If neither of them are here, I hope that someone from the Harlequin camp will take a copy of this programme to show them that one crowd of supporters, not the least knowledgeable in English rugby, has valued their contribution to the game for their sheer virtuosity and for the pleasure they have both given us over the years.

We seem to have been up against Peter Winterbottom for ever, as a shock-headed young dynamo for Headingley and Yorkshire, and as the seasoned and formidable international of the second half of his long career. His back row partnership with Mike Teague has been one of the cornerstones of England's recent successes, and I'm sure that the All Blacks will have reason to remember its swansong after this summer's festivities in New Zealand. Peter's influence on the game has been immense, and I hope that rugby doesn't lose him just because he has, at least, yielded to anno domini.

Andrew Harriman could hardly be a more different animal and still be playing the same game. While Winterbottom has been all industry, his light frequently hidden under the bushel of the mayhem around the base of the scrum, Andrew's virtues have always been plain for all to see, out there on the wing. Extreme speed, allied to a silky smooth elusiveness, has made him of the most feared opponents in the game. Give him the ball and a foot to move in and - boy! - have you got problems.

Some of the fastest men in the world found out about that in last weekend's World Cup Sevens, and it was one of the season's great moments to see him raising the Cup as Captain of England on that wet Sunday afternoon.

It was a fitting way to bow out, and we shall miss him. But then; we usually did.

We certainly welcome Harlequins as our guests on this last day of Gloucester's season. We hope they thoroughly enjoy themselves, and don't let thoughts of next Saturday's game get in the way of the after-match libations.

### THANKS TO KONICA MERCIAN

It's always nice to welcome a new Sponsor to Kingsholm, especially one who has been disappointed once, but has decided to persevere. Today's benefactors were originally down to dispense corporate hospitality at the New Year visit of Moseley, but as you will recall, unkind weather intervened. Better late than never, and we're delighted to see them along today.

*(cont. on page 5)*



**THE  
SOCIETY  
THAT  
TRIES  
HARDER**



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



## *Peter Arnold (cont.)*

The generous company in question is Konica Mercian, the Midlands arm of the worldwide and highly respected Konica Corporation. In case you're not into such things, I should tell you that Konica are among the world's leading suppliers of business machines, especially photocopiers. Indeed, they were the first company in the field to be awarded the coveted Blue Angel Award for environmentally friendly operations, and the complete range of Konica copiers has now been granted the Blue Angel seal of approval. The Corporation's plants in Germany and Japan have both won the ISO 9002 Certificate which covers manufacturing and administrative techniques, so they're not only environmentally acceptable but, pretty good at what they do, as well.

Mind you; they have had a lot of practice. This year sees the 120th anniversary of the worldwide Corporation, and the 20th year of Konica Business Machines in the UK. For much of that time Konica Mercian have been supplying many major UK companies, including our own Birds Eye Walls, as well as Austin-Rover, Weetabix, BT and NEC.

It would have been appropriate for Konica Mercian to have come to Kingsholm over the New Year, because their head office is based in central Birmingham, just down the road from the Moseley ground, just to embellish the rugby connection, their East Midland showroom is in Northampton. One way and another these two establishments give them excellent communications with just about the whole country. They're obviously well placed for the motorway network, and they also point out that their area 'boasts more nautical canal miles than anywhere else in Europe', which our Dutch and Italian rugby contacts will find interesting.

One thing which today's exercise emphasises is that, part of a major international organisation they may be, but they still have a quite individual identity - a local personality, if you like. They see this as a 'most positive advantage in offering an efficient *local* service.

I hope, however, that they're not thinking too much about work today. It's the end of the Season, the beginning of Spring, and the day Gloucester entertain Harlequins, which is a trio of perfectly good reasons for simply enjoying oneself. We all hope they do that, extend our

sincere thanks for their valued support, and hope to see them again before too much water has flowed along the canal network.

### **FEELING BETTER NOW**

You may remember that we had two Match Mascots for the Orrell game, one wearing the colours of each club. It wasn't until after the match that I found out that young Andrew Ead, who was to do the honours for the visitors, had been laid low by a bout of chicken pox on the very day before the game, and that a replacement had had to be brought on at the last minute - almost literally.

Obviously, the 7 year-old Andrew was intensely disappointed by his misfortune, so it's nice to be able to report that we've been able to slot him in today in recompense. In fact, he'll now be able to run out in the authentic cherry-and-white rather than in the blue-and-black of Orrell, so at least his local pride is augmented.

In fact, Master Ead is one of our more far-flung Mascots, hailing from Nailsea, near Bristol. If you wonder why he's done us the honour, it's because his Dad, John is National Accounts Manager for the Royal Mail who were our sponsors on the Orrell day, and who nominated the Mascots. So perhaps we've pinched a potential Bristol player, which makes a nice change in view of recent events.

Andrew attends Hannah Moore School at Nailsea, enjoys his rugby and his football. He's also a great bike rider and computer buff and swims a lot. His Mum, Lorena, is a nurse, which could come in handy respecting the bumps and bruises which all young rugby players are heir to.

Nice to see you along after all, Andrew. Hope to see much more of you in a few years time.

### **YOU DUG DEEP**

Talking about Orrell, you may recall that our friends from Saint John's Ambulance made their annual collection at that match. They were highly delighted by the result, which amounted to £911 and some loose change. That's a lot of bread by any reckoning, and the boys (and girls) in black-and-white, who do such a great job for us, season-in and season-out ask me to relay their sincere thanks.

Think nothing of it, people. It's no more than you deserve.

*(cont. on page 8)*

## **ONE FIRST CLASS TEAM SUPPORTING ANOTHER**



**THE THOROUGHBRED BANK.**



## *Peter Arnold (cont.)*

### TENS ON MAY 3

I must admit that Sevens rugby has never really been my cup of Lapsang Suchong. I usually describe it as 'all icing and no cake'. However, the exciting events of last Sunday did modify my views a little, and heightens my expectations for the feast of Tens rugby which we are to enjoy on Bank Holiday Monday, May 3rd.

You'll know by now - I expect - that the occasion is the Worthington Best Bitter National tens Tournament, which all the top English Clubs (including Harlequins but excluding Leicester), have agreed to enter. I've now received an official transcript of the rules of the competition, the bones of which I've picked out and hereby pass on to you.

To start with all the normal Laws as framed by the International Board apply with certain modifications, the first of which is, obviously, that a team shall consist of ten players rather than fifteen. One Law which *hasn't* been changed is Law 20(4) which reads:

*'A minimum of five players from each team shall be required to form a scrummage'*, and that's the one which makes all the difference between a sort of augmented Sevens and a genuinely new form of the game.

Each side may only have a squad of twelve players, all of whom must be registered with the Tournament Office before the start of play. A

team may change its players from game to game, and replacements can only come on for the normal injury reasons. Once a player has left the field through injury, he can't play again in the tournament, so diplomatic injuries are out. There can be only two replacements in any game.

You may think that squads of twelve for teams of ten make that last clause redundant, but not so. If a side can only field ten, or less than ten, through injury players may be borrowed from any team which has already been eliminated from the tournament. However, any side borrowing a player or players in this way must field all its own fit players before calling on the services of the 'half-inched' ones.

Each game will consist of ten minutes each way with a two minute interval, except for the Final, which will last for twelve minutes with a three minute interval, so there will be some pretty knackered players around by about 6.30 that evening.

That will be especially true if we get many ties after full time. In that case, extra time will be played in sessions of five minutes, after each of which teams change ends without interval. It's a sudden death situation, however: the first points scored will decide the game.

Finally, any player sent off by the ref, won't play again in the whole tournament, and will be reported to the disciplinary body appropriate to his own club. It's also nice to see that all Touch

*(cont. on page 8)*

# NOBBY'S NEWSDESK



*Hello everyone and welcome to Kingsholm for this season's final first XV fixture. Today we entertain the might of the Harlequins who are bound to be on a high after their cup semi final victory over Wasps. With both clubs assured of first division status next year personal pride is the only thing riding on this result and I am sure that the lads will want to put up a good display to thank all the loyal fans that have stood by them throughout this troublesome season.*

*The Gold Bond lottery, for which I am the mascot, carries on throughout the summer. In fact it is going to be a very busy time for the Gold Bond staff as they are running a large door to door campaign throughout the close season. I understand that they still need plenty more part time helpers for this operation and would love to hear from anybody that wishes to earn some extra money during the summer months.*

*Well goodbye for now I hope to see you all again next season.*

*Cheers, NOBBY*

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## *Peter Arnold (cont.)*

Judges will be qualified referees, appointed by the Gloucestershire Society.

Better stay fit, chaps. You'll be running up and down the line like Linford Christie in a milk commercial.

If that lot hasn't whetted your appetite, then nothing will. Tickets are available from the office (£8.00 stand, £5.00 ground, £3.00 for the usual concessions), from 9.30 am to 5.00 pm, any weekday from now until the tournament. I'm told they're going well, so perhaps it would be better not to chance your arm on the gate.

### **AGM ON JULY 15th**

You May have already read, here or in the press, that the Club AGM is to be held on Thursday, July 15th at the Bird's Eye Walls Club at Barnwood, commencing at 7.30 pm.

I've had the odd query about the reason for the change of venue, so I asked Doug Wadley, who is the Fount of All Knowledge on such matters. He tells me that, for the last couple of years, the Complex has been getting overcrowded for this event, with rows of people standing around the walls, so with the possibility that this year's meeting will be even more well attended - partly because of the anticipated advent of our new Director of Coaching - it has been decided to find a roomier venue.

"Anyway," commented Mr. Wadley, "It's only going back to the old tradition. We used to hold the AGM all over the place; in the Corn Exchange for example."

Good Lord, Doug. I can't even remember the Corn Exchange!

### **WELL DONE UNITED!**

So United have done it. In considerable style at that. Their 53-14 demolition of Bath United last Saturday gave them their Second XV's Championship for the third year in a row, and that is an achievement which should not be underrated just because it's at second-string level. In some ways, it's more difficult than an equivalent First XV success, because United teams can never claim a settled side. Calls to the seniors take care of that, and with the toing and froing we've been getting this season, there must have been times when United didn't know where their next side was coming from.

*(cont. on page 28)*

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## Ed Martin

So here we are at the end of the 92nd season of rugby at Kingsholm (there were no official matches during the two World Wars).

Now, just for a change, forget about the league and cup . . . and let's look at the 1992/3 season and see how it stacks up against those 91 others.

Depending on the result today, Gloucester will post an overall winning percentage of between 70.00 (if Harlequins win) and 72.50 (with a Gloucester win). The home winning percentage will be between 80.00 and 85.00.

The only certain thing is that Gloucester's away winning percentage is 60.00. And that percentage ranks joint 18th best season in club history since the points system was introduced in 1891 (the other 60.00% years were 1908/9, 1935/6 1963/4, and 1976/7).

It gets better . . . The plus 146 points difference is the fourth best ever.

The home record will be between the 30th and 44th best on record in terms of winning percentage and around 30th best in the points difference department.

Overall, we are looking at either 24th or 22nd best season since 1891 as far as winning percentage goes and around 16th best as far as points difference is concerned.

This afternoon is the 4,068 match to be played by Gloucester since the club was founded in 1873. And with the 2,508 wins, 1,251 losses and 309 ties, this gives the club an overall 65.45 winning percentage (65.46 with a win today and 65.43 with a loss).

The "Glorious Gloucester" Kingsholm record will be either 77.55, 77.57 or 77.60 per cent from the 2,176 matches staged on this ground (so far 1,615 wins 415 losses and 145 ties).

And if that does not put a shiver up the spines of visiting teams, then Gloucester has a points different of plus 20,849 at Kingsholm. The Cherry and Whites have scored 35,619 points and have yielded 14,770 to opponents.

One trivial "number" that the 1992-3 season will be remembered for is the plus 146 points difference at away matches. This brings Gloucester in overall credit - there is a plus 27 difference in all away matches since 1891.

And this is the first time since the end of the 1925-6 season that the Cherry and Whites have had an overall away points difference NOT written in red ink!

Now for the records of matches played between Gloucester and Harlequins. The series began when Harlequins visited Kingsholm on Saturday March 29, 1913, with both teams scoring a goal and a try each for an 8-8 stand-off.

To date, there have been 35 visits to Kingsholm by Harlequins, 23 of the encounters being won by Gloucester and 10 by the 'Quins. In those 35 matches, Gloucester have scored 479 points and allowed 340.

The match-up at Kingsholm on April 27, 1991 saw the Cherry and Whites record their highest-ever score against Harlequins - 36 points, while the 23-point winning margin in the encounter on October 12, 1974 is Gloucester's biggest win against the London club (geographical note for the 'Quins: anywhere east of Reading is London in these 'ere parts).

Best performance by Harlequins was the Merit Table clash at Twickers on October 12, 1985 when Gloucester were swept aside 43-6. This was a record score against Gloucester by an English club for five seasons until Bath clocked 48 points in the cup final (six Welsh clubs have recorded greater than 43 points against Gloucester).

Once again, thanks to John Hopcroft who has immersed himself in ancient newspapers in a bid to get an accurate as possible record of the Gloucester Rugby Football Club. Also thanks go to the staff of the Gloucester Collection at the City Library in Brunswick Road (especially to Roz Lane who, rumour has it, has had enough of us sports researchers and is opting for retirement!).

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## *Peter Arnold (cont.)*

I don't know whether Gloucester United have been nominated for the annual Team of the Year awards, but if not - they jolly well should have been.

### **THANKS TO THE TRAVELLERS**

At this point in the season, I usually make space to thank everyone who has contributed to the Club over the months, in whatever capacity, and this I do quite unreservedly. However, this time round, Peter Ford asks me to give pride of place to the Cherry-and-White Army who have travelled to away matches to support the boys this season, quite frequently in times of adversity. Indeed, most clubs find that their away support dwindles when the side isn't doing well, but there has been no sign of that where Gloucester is concerned.

Of course, the two games where the support factor has been most evident were the away matches at Northampton and Bristol, and it is not entirely coincidental that those were the games which turned the season. All the players will tell you that such magnificent vocal support does make a significant difference to effort, determination and performance: "I felt the hairs prickle up on the back of my neck", commented one player describing the sensation as he ran out at Bristol.

But those two games, vital as they were, were only the tip of the iceberg. The support has been quite superb all season, and everyone who has anything to do with success (or lack of it) on the field offers sincere thanks for the expenditure in time, lungpower, and by no means least, money which such support represents. It isn't cheap to travel away, these days.

I must inject something of a sour note at this point. One or two opposing clubs, understandably miffed at hearing their home support drowned out by the Gloucester roar, have seen fit to sneer at our supporters in the pages of their programmes. Nothing wrong with a little-leg pulling, but some comments have been rather more than that, and probably stem from good, old fashioned envy. It's not something I would do myself, although I am as proficient at the hatchet job as anyone, and I don't see the necessity for endangering relationships in this way.

More to the point, it's counter productive. I'm not going to mention names, but Gloucester supporters who have seen the programme notes in question are obviously going to shout that much louder next season.

You can't get away from the fact that we have the best set of travelling supporters in the country. Long may that be the case, and long may the Gloucester decibel level resound around the rugby grounds of England.

### **TAILPIECE**

Had a call from Miss Barbara Keck the other night, taking me to task for not mentioning that fine No. 8, Bob Hodge in my notes for the Fylde programme. Older supporters will remember Bob well, the chap who used to confine John Gwilliam to the second row, in spite of the fact that the formidable John was No. 8 and Captain of Wales at the time. Miss Keck's point was that Bob Hodge came to Gloucester from Fylde, a point I knew but had forgotten.

I'll happily accept criticism from Barbara Keck, who is not only one of Gloucester's longest-serving supporters, but one of a whole dynasty of similar aficionados. Barbara's another and sister were both Kingsholm regulars until they were well into their eighties, and similar things could be said about various male members of their clan.

Sorry to be ungallant, but Barbara won't mind me mentioning that she has now achieved octogenarian status herself, and can still be seen in the stand from time to time. She doesn't get along as regularly as she would like, because she finds that she doesn't see as well as she used to, and doesn't really like driving after dark any more.

Come on chaps, I'm sure someone will give her a lift on occasions, next season.

Barbara Keck is not the only person who has written or spoken to me this season, with views, anecdotes or information for these notes. Such contributions are very valuable, even if I can't use them in their entirety. They do keep me in touch with what the 'ordinary' supporter is thinking. Keep them coming.

And summer well.