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Welcome
to
Kingsholm



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GLOUCESTER

RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

v

CARDIFF

SATURDAY OCTOBER 16th, 1993

KICK OFF 3.00 p.m.



Official Programme

£1.00

Peter Arnold



BETTER LATE . . .



Now look, I don't want to hear about it. Okay?

Let's just forget about League tribulations for the next few weeks, and enjoy the fare placed in front of us. And a gourmet menu it is too. Cardiff paying us a visit is noteworthy enough, goodness knows, but one does have to say that the prospect of the imminent arrival of the South African Barbarians at least matches today's game, and taken as a pair, they're enough to make anyone salivate.

So, as Confucius he say, let's lay back and enjoy it.

Going back to last season, it would be fair to say that I've never encountered so many disappointed fans as I did when Cardiff, no doubt for excellent reasons, cancelled their arranged Friday evening fixture. We'd been looking forward to the return of the famous side from the capital of the Principality for at least a decade, and to have the occasion postponed for twelve months did seem a bit hard. Which means that they're all the more welcome today.

The last time Cardiff came to Kingsholm was to help us open the new complex under the stand. A lot of bitter has poured over the bridgework since then, however, and it comes as something of a shock to realise just how much has happened at the old ground since they were here.

No visiting Cardiff supporter, for example, will have seen our hospitality boxes, which we have come to regard as part of the scenery for some years now. The last time our hypothetical supporter was here he will have found a skittle alley where the Member's lounge is now. We couldn't even offer him a Club Shop to buy a souvenir from — although John Beaman was, I think, offering goodies from a table just inside the Clubhouse entrance, so he'll see one familiar face,

at least.

Rails round the ground were lower then. There weren't so many individual plastic seats in the Stand. This programme was about half the size, in black-and white only, and these notes considerably shorter. It makes me feel old to realise that I was writing them even then, but bashing them out on an old electric typewriter, rather than on a word processor. And I had to deliver them to the printer by hand, whereas, nowadays I fax them through. To the same printer, incidentally, although the job was actually done in premises next door.

There was no Gold Bond, no Golden Gamble, and far fewer Sponsors. We didn't have any Match Mascots. Tom Durkin was still in charge of medical matters, and if a player got himself slightly bent on the field, he would very likely be ministered to by a grinning St. John's man, rather than an attractive young lady.

No doubt we could go on listing changes, but I can't give you any recollections of the game itself, because I don't have any, a circumstance for which I've never quite forgiven Councillor Mike Pullon, who is a Leicester supporter, which might explain it.

Mike was Chairman of the City Leisure Services Committee at the time, and I was occupying the Vice Chair. On the evening of the game, Mike called a meeting at short notice. He did set the start time at 5.00 pm, and as the business, though urgent, didn't seem very substantial, it looked as if I'd make the kick-off without too much trouble.

Well, as sometimes happens, it didn't prove as easy as that, and I walked on to the ground just as the victorious Cardiff side was running off. So you've probably seen Cardiff at Kingsholm more recently that I have.

Of course, at the time of writing, I haven't

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Peter Arnold cont.

seen the Gloucester side, though it seems very likely that the selectors will take the opportunity to give a few new faces a run out*. That doesn't matter. Cardiff will be severely weakened by International, and possibly Welsh 'A' team calls. That doesn't matter either. The fact is that this is Cardiff v. Gloucester at Kingsholm, and no fixture has a better pedigree, or has resulted in more memorable encounters, than that.

It gives us all quite inexpressible pleasure to welcome Cardiff after all this time, and we hope they thoroughly enjoy themselves. We also hope that today's overcrowded fixture lists don't prevent the occasion from being a regular one. As it always was, and as it should be.

**Can a face run? Well - you know what I mean.*

GOLDEN GAMBLE

One of the successes of this season, so far, has been the advent of the 'Golden Gamble'. Since it started, three lucky punters have already gone home over £200 richer than they were when they came into the ground. In fact, I think I'm right in saying that no winner has received less than that figure.

If you haven't come across it yet, I should tell you that the whole thing is simplicity itself. When you arrive, some young lady or gentleman will probably come up to you brandishing a clipboard. He, or she, will invite you to accept a ticket in exchange for a sum of £1.00 and your name and address.

After kick-off, all the takings are added up, and the tickets placed in Andrew Benzie's natty gent's bowler hat. One ticket is drawn, and a cheque equivalent in value to half the takings is presented to the jammy so-and-so whose name appears on it. Quick. Simple to understand and administer. And nicely profitable to both winner and Club.

And it all takes place in time for the cheque to be handed to the lucky recipient at half time, in front of the player's entrance to the field, in the middle of the main stand. So, if you're a visiting supporter, or only an occasional visitor you needn't worry about receiving your winnings before you leave.

Gotta be worth a go, hasn't it?

COACHES TO ORRELL

December 4th seems a long way away, but the ever-efficient Trevor Pritchard is already

exercising his mind about the League match at Orrell that day.

He has to really, because it may come as a shock to the system to learn that we only have three First XV home games booked between now and then, so there isn't much chance for me to tell you about coach arrangements.

The basic information is that there *will* be coaches, and that a seat on one will cost you £6.50. Trevor also asks if you will, for administrative reasons, please, *please* give him your money by the previous Wednesday, which is December 1st. You might as well pay up and look cheerful well before that though, mightn't you? You'll know you're safe then.

My own memories of the Orrell ground at Edgehall Road, Wigan are mixed, I've only been there once, but on that occasion was very impressed by how pleasant the relatively small ground is, the quality and price of the beer, the excellence of the food, and the friendliness of the home supporters. After all that, Gloucester went and lost their Cup match, partly through unfamiliarity with the two-way slope of the pitch, and partly through a disallowed try which everyone on the ground, except the referee, thought that Nick Price had scored.

The trip is to be recommended, so if you're interested make your arrangements with Trevor as soon as you can.

Incidentally, Trevor's preoccupation with the safari to Wigan doesn't mean that there won't be coaches to Bristol on November 13th. There will, but they're much easier to arrange at short notice, if necessary, and in any case, practically fill themselves.

Ask Trevor about those, too.

SPRINGBOK BAA-BAA's

Well, I get tired of typing 'South African Barbarians', who, as you know, are paying us the compliment of starting their tour here next Tuesday, as ever was.

Tickets have been on sale for a while now, at £8.00 for the Stand, £6.00 for the Temporary Stand and £5.00 for the Ground (half price for the last two for the usual concessions.) At the time of writing (Wednesday) there are still some tickets left, but they are dwindling. However, Doug Wadley expects that a few will still be available at the time you read this, so if you've had a temporary bout of amnesia on the matter, all may not yet be lost. Drop into the office.

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Doug also asks me to point out that 'all pay' doesn't mean the same as 'all ticket', and that the reason Ground tickets have been made available for this game is simply that it's sensible to try and ease congestion at the turnstiles. If you like to take the chance on Tuesday evening, you can turn up and pay at the gate. But I'd get here a bit early if I were you: I'd hate you to miss the kick-off, or not be able to get into your preferred vantage point.

DIVISION

Next Saturday, Kingsholm welcomes the South West and North sides for the second ADT Divisional Championship game of this season's series. This isn't, of course, a Gloucester game, so we're on the 'all pay' trail again.

Last season's Divisional match at Kingsholm proved to be just about the best game in that year's Championship, and virtually sealed the title for the South West Division, when the home side beat London. It would be nice if that sort of thing were to happen again, and if it did, you wouldn't want to have missed it.

Tickets are available now, and the prices are the same as for the South African Barbarians match, i.e. £8.00 Stand, £6.00 Temporary Stand, £5.00 Ground. Again, you'll be able to pay at the gate should you feel so inclined.

EMERGING ENGLAND

The other big occasion with International implications arrives exactly one month later on Tuesday, November 23rd. On that day,

Kingsholm hosts the new Emerging England side, coached by our own Keith Richardson, who will have to cope with the mighty New Zealand touring party.

Once more we're in an 'all pay' situation, only this time it's a bit more expensive. Stand tickets will cost £12.00. The Temporary Stand is priced at £8.00, and it will set you back £6.00 to get on to the ground, but should be well worth it. After all, the All Blacks are always worth shelling out a few quid to see.

You'll recall that the last time the full New Zealand side were here was when they gave the USA Eagles a right seeing to in the World Cup a couple of seasons ago. It will be nice to hear the 'Haka' ringing round Kingsholm again.

I'm told that tickets will be on sale from the office as from Monday week, that is October 25th. The Fair Geraldine is confidently expecting to be rushed off her feet, so you have been warned.

GANGWAY!

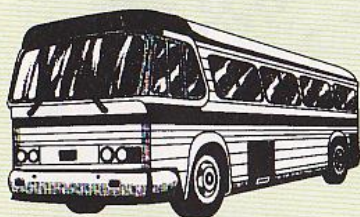
Mention of the three forthcoming Star Attractions reminds me to remind you that Fire Regulations insist that spectators must not block gangways or stand on steps. Normally that isn't a problem, but when the ground gets near capacity, it can be a fair old temptation to stand in the Forbidden Zones.

If you do, no doubt inadvertently, find yourself transgressing, then don't get all uppity if a Steward moves you on. That's what he's there for, and he's only obeying the Law.

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Peter Arnold cont.

STAND TRANSFERS

We have something of a problem with supplying transfers to the Stand for people with ground tickets, season or otherwise. This especially applies to supporters coming in from the Dean's Walk end, where the disappearance of the old Portacabin has deprived us of a useful facility for such things.

One does have to say that the difficulty has been exacerbated by a decision made by the Members at last July's AGM, namely the one which decreed that Stand seats will be reserved for Stand season ticket holders until 15 minutes before kick-off. That means, of course, that transfers simply can't be issued until almost that time.

At the moment — and you'll see a notice to this effect struck on the doors — supporters are asked to buy their transfers from the office, which is outside the ground. This is obviously not ideal, but the best anyone can think of at the moment.

The old phrase 'We're working on it' applies here, and various people are bending their mighty intellects towards a solution. I'm afraid that's the best I can do at the moment, but if anyone has a bright idea, I'm sure the Committee would be pleased to hear about it.

RUN OUT FOR RICHARD

Our Match Mascots do seem to have acquired a Crypt School connection these days. The latest in the line is Richard Howell who is eleven years old, and who has just started at the School this term, and doesn't have far to go because he lives in Stroud Road.

By doing that he follows in his Dad's footsteps. Dad is Derek Howell, who many people will remember for his not inconsiderable prowess behind the stumps at Gloucester City.

I don't know about Richard's aspirations as a cricketer, but I do know he's dead keen to make a name for himself as a scrum half, thus following in the footsteps of Marcus Hannaford, who of course, had a distinguished career with Old Cryptians before coming to Kingsholm.

This isn't Richard's first visit to Kingsholm, but is by far the biggest match he's been to, so he's particularly pleased at being in the limelight.

Perhaps it won't be the last time he can say that.

ANY TO COME?

While on the subject, I'm told that there's room for any other aspiring youngster who fancies doing the Match Mascot job at some time or other. It doesn't cost anything, but there is one important perk if a lad (or girl) can find someone

to sponsor him (or her) to the tune of £55.00. Namely, the Mascot gets to keep the kit.

Anyone interested? Ring Andrew Benzie on 0452 419666.

TAILPIECE

Since last season I have acquired a new word processing system, which means that I'm now the proud processor of a "Spellcheck", which for anyone not familiar with such things, is a system whereby the computer checks your spelling for you.

I must admit that I've never bothered with one before, my reaction to any eager salesman being 'the day I need a Spellcheck is the day I give up'. However, it does come in handy for finding typing errors, so I've succumbed.

One of the features of the system is that when the computer finds a word it doesn't recognise, it suggests an alternative to you. Which can result in some highly eccentric words and phrases, especially where proper names are concerned. For example, 'Gloucester v Cardiff' comes out as 'GLUCOSE v. CARDIAC', which sounds a bit medical, and I hope doesn't suggest that we're in for a particularly rough game.

The computer also suggest that I replace 'Keith Richardson' with 'KELT RIBANDS', which is more appropriate to our Scottish contingent than to a good Geordie like our respected coach.

'Barrie Corless' becomes 'BARRIER COXLESS', which is almost libellous, while 'Orrell' translated to 'ORDEAL' which is certainly appropriate. On the other hand, my computer tries 'DOG WADDED' for 'Doug Wadley' and 'TREMOR PREACHED' for Trevor Pritchard.

But the one that intrigues me is that 'Bristol' simply translates to 'BRISTOLS'. How on earth did *that* get into the Spellcheck dictionary I ask myself.



Ed Martin — **IN PERSPECTIVE**

MOTHER OF ALL FIXTURES

The Gloucester vs Cardiff fixture is perhaps one of the great historic clashes in British Rugby — and certainly the oldest Anglo-Welsh club clash at senior level in the book.

So it is good to welcome the lads from the Arms Park, on the banks of the River Taff, to Kingsholm for their 71st visit.

We all at Kingsholm know that Cardiff is "the mother of all Gloucester fixtures". The Cherry and Whites have a winning percentage of just 26.98 against Cardiff, who have won 96 of the 139 fixtures since the points system was introduced in England in September 1891 (11 of the encounters were drawn).

A couple of seasons back, when the World Cup was coming to its conclusion, Gloucester ventured down to the Arms Park and duly posted an 11-6 triumph. Perhaps that should be TRIUMPH as we had not beaten Cardiff on their home turf since the 9-6 win in September 1934!

The win two years ago was only the sixth in 100 years (our winning percentage is a mere 9.42 in matches since 1891 at Cardiff).

Results at Kingsholm have been a little better. Gloucester has a princely 44.29 per cent winning record — the last home victory being in the 22-3 result in the 1974-5 season.

YANKEE TAKEOVER

Gloucester could soon be losing one of its Kingsholm "records". Currently Kingsholm appears to be the toughest football ground in the world for opponents to post a win.

To date, 2,182 matches have been played by Gloucester at Kingsholm. 1,619 have been won, 417 have been lost and 146 drawn. This gives a winning percentage of 77.54.

It appears that no other football club (be it Association, Rugby, Rugby league, Australian, Canadian, American or Irish) has a home stand on their current ground that can top that figure.

Mind, you, I am a little suspicious as I would have thought that the Arms Park and Cardiff could have topped that, but apparently not. Peter Myhan down in Cardiff is checking...

That leaves the American University gridiron giant of Notre Dame, who boast the best home record in the USA.

Their 44-0 demolition job of the University of Pittsburgh last Saturday afternoon gives the "Fighting Irish" a record of 237 wins, 67 losses and five ties at Notre Dame Stadium since it was opened on October 4, 1930.

Mathematicians will have already worked out that the winning percentage of Notre Dame is 77.51 — dangerously close to Gloucester's.

A win today against Cardiff would widen the gap a little as Notre Dame are not at home again until October 23. But a loss today would put both grounds on 77.51 percent, with Notre Dame Stadium ahead of Kingsholm by eight ten thousands of a percentage point.

Gloucester's overall playing record against Cardiff since 1891 is as follows:

	Overall	Home	Away
Played	139	70	69
Won	32	26	6
Lost	96	34	62
Drawn	11	10	1
PF	745	457	288
PA	1575	592	983

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