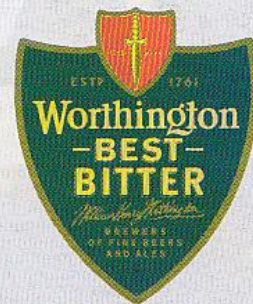


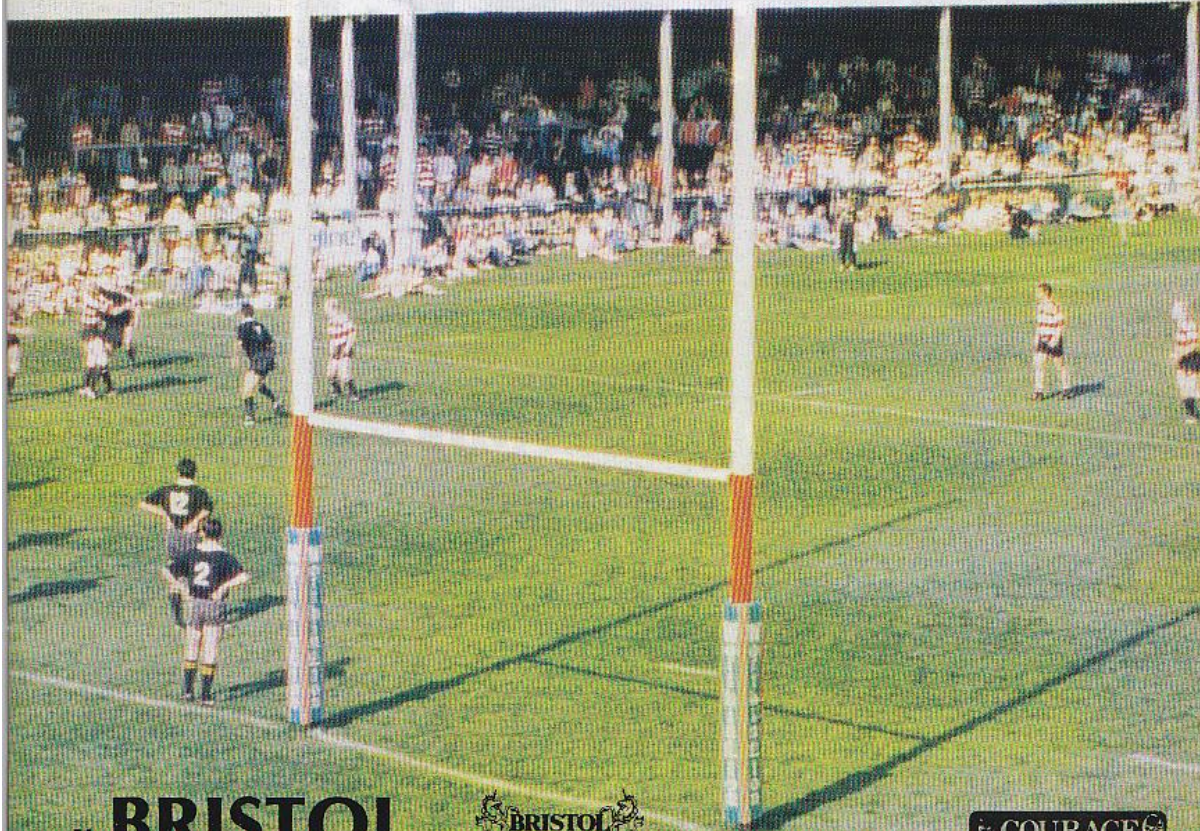
# GLOUCESTER RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB



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v **BRISTOL**



Saturday 15th October 1994

Kick off — 3.00 p.m.



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# ..... Peter Arnold .....

## NOT THE TIME TO LOSE OUR NERVE

That's easy enough to write, but if ever a series of results were calculated to be enough to cause a run on sales of tranquillisers, then the one we're in right now certainly qualifies.

Two weeks ago, Bath were, in my humble opinion, just a shade lucky to get away with it here at Kingsholm. Then we go and lose at Sale last Saturday. To cap it all, the visit of Bristol to Gloucester was never an event that you'd recommend to persons of a nervous disposition.

I don't have to tell *you* about the long history — even mythology — of the century-long series between the two great West Country clubs. If Ed Martin were to report all the information he has about the fixture, it would need a publication of *Britannica* proportions. What I can say, I think, is that today's respected and most welcome visitors are arguably the most improved side in the League over the past couple of seasons. It hurts me to record that last season's Kingsholm encounter was about the most one-sided one I remember in half a century of watching our favourite fixture. Bristol looked very good indeed. Gloucester — didn't.

Of course, a lot of beer has flowed over the bridgework since then, a fair proportion of it consumed at the National Tens Tournament in May. Bristol looked worthy winners right from the first round that day, but whether Gloucester could have pipped them in the Final had it not been for an immediate run out after an extremely tough and exhausting semi-final is a matter for conjecture. They did score first, but the day's exertions had taken it out of the squad's legs by then, and Bristol were simply too quick when it came down to the wire.

They shouldn't be too quick for Gloucester today, on paper at any rate. One thing the pundits have been observing over the past three weeks or so is the sheer speed that the lads can call on in the three quarter line. In the forwards, the likes of Blackmore and Shaw snatched a fair few headlines last season, but that honour has been filched by West and Sims this time round.

So things do look fairly evenly matched. However, as we've learned many times in the past, all such considerations count for nothing when Gloucester meets Bristol. About the only thing we can state with

confidence is that we'd do well to expect the unexpected.

One thing which hasn't changed over the years is the respect, and even affection, with which our two clubs have always regarded each other. Although the fixture has produced some of the hardest games ever seen, even at Kingsholm, 'needle' in its broadest sense, has never been a feature. Rivals we may be. Enemies, never.

Whatever the situation, Bristol's visit to Kingsholm has always been one of the highlights of the season. That's still the case, and long may it remain so.

There seems no earthly reason why it shouldn't.

### SAINTS NEXT WEEK

One of the vagaries of the League system is that, in spite of losing to Sale last week, we actually ended up one place *higher* in the League table than we had been the day before. The reason, of course, was that both West Hartlepool and Northampton lost, and points difference made the difference, if you'll pardon the description.

This makes next Saturday's visit to Franklin Gardens a vital one. There would certainly be a lot of head-scratching and breast-beating if we were to lose it. So the more support the lads can get at Northampton, the better.

One mustn't take the Saints too lightly, simply because they've been in the doldrums so far this season. They still have some very classy players, and the great Ian McGeechan is now firmly in control. They also have a very committed set of fans, who must be absolutely salivating for some success by now. They'll take a bit of outshouting, but I know we can count on you.

If you're driving to Northampton, the directions are as follows:

From Junction 15A on the M1, strike for the town centre. At the THIRD roundabout, take a RIGHT turn and look for signposts to the carpark after about three-quarters of a mile. I'm told that it will cost you £6.00 to get in, and that the permanent stand costs £10.00 (!). There is, of course, a temporary stand at £8.00.

Of course, Trevor Pritchard will be running a coach. It

*Cont on page 12*

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— . — Ed Martin — **In Perspective** — . —

The whole world — and his dog — seems to be talking about, err, “professionalism” in the sport of rugby union. Mind you, the talk has been going on for more years than anyone can remember — after all, the “northern” code came about as a result of a few of the lads wanting a couple of bob compensation for playing on a Saturday afternoon when they otherwise would have been at work.

Now, the “Powers That Be” from Twickers have always said that they will take action against clubs when they are given the proof that clubs are offering filthy lucre to their players.

One club that did get caught — and punished — was Gloucester! Remember “The Shewell Case?”

Gloucester’s roll of players who have turned out for the first team includes one W. Shewell who made just one appearance — on Saturday December 30, 1893 he played left wing for Gloucester in the away game against Newport.

Everyone in Gloucester at the time wished that he had not played — and not because Gloucester were swept aside by the “Usksiders” 26-0 (seven tries were scored against Gloucester that day).

The problem was that Mr Shewell played for Stroud. And Stroud were not amused. The case went right to the top — the Rugby Football Union, via the Gloucestershire Union.

The Citizen, in March 1894, reported: *“It will be remembered that the complaints alleged against (the Gloucester Club) by the Stroud Football Club were playing W. Shewell, a member of the latter organisation, against Newport without a transfer, and further, offering him inducements to throw in his lot with Gloucester.”*

The charges were heard by the county union who found that John Hanman (club captain) and A. Kiddle both of the Gloucester club, and Shewell of Stroud all acted in contravention of the rules of Rugby Football Union relating to professionalism. All three were suspended from playing for two months.

In addition, the County Union, while admitting that the Gloucester club did not breach the rules, levied a fine on the club of £10 with the resolution that the Union’s treasurer should give the money to the Gloucester District Nursing Society.

*“The sentence was received with much indignation in Gloucester,”* the Citizen reported. *“A committee meeting of the club was called to consider what action should be taken. The result was that it was unanimously decided to appeal to the Rugby Football Union against the decision, the City club contending that the fine was unjust.”*

The Club duly deposited their £50 for the appeal. But after it emerged that Mr Boughton, Chairman of both the Gloucestershire Union and Gloucester club, was said to have observed that the County had exceeded their power, the Gloucester club withdrew their appeal — and the fine was paid by well-wishers.

However, the Rugby Football Union decided to appoint a committee to investigate the entire matter — after all, the case involved allegations of “play-for-pay”. Messrs Rowland Hill, Crane, Whalley, Miller and Cail (president of the Rugby Union) duly met in Birmingham on Friday March 2, 1894 to investigate the matter “behind closed doors”, as we would say today.

The Citizen reported in a special late edition the resolutions passed by the committee that afternoon: *“That the Gloucester Football Club and Ground be suspended from playing football from the 5th to the 24th of March (inclusive); that Mr J. Hanman be suspended from playing football for the remainder of the season; and that all the expenses of this enquiry be paid by the Gloucester Football Club.”*

The severity of the “sentence” surprised everyone, including Stroud. The records show that the RFU enquiry decided matters under the Laws of Professionalism rather than the Laws of Player Transfers.

Gloucester travelled to Bath for the scheduled clash at The County Ground on March 3. When the Gloucester players ran out onto the field they were given a rare rousing cheer, such was the public sympathy in Bristol. The Bristol club also offered an “extra” fixture at Kingsholm after the suspension — this was the Fenner’s XV match, won 15-0 by Gloucester, played on Saturday April 21.

One thing that the Enquiry Committee did decide in favour of Gloucester was that the County treasurer should refund the £10.

Apparently, to this day, the tenner has not reached Kingsholm!

## How Barrie



## Sees It

The last two Saturdays have shown the difficulties of coaching a team. Week one, Bath at Kingsholm, huge crowd, electric atmosphere, local pride at stake and no problem motivating the players. Result, a very good Gloucester performance running the champions close and team comes close to an upset. Week two, Sale away, small crowd with consequent lack of atmosphere, players take win for granted, coach questions level of motivation. Result a poor performance by recent standards, game lost by 2 points, which should have been a reasonably comfortable win.

The tangible aspects of coaching are reasonably simple to improve for the experienced coach, spot the fault or weakness, devise a skills programme player improves. Work out a structural fitness regime for the summer, test players at the start of the pre-season training, fitness improves. These things are measurable, the player can see an improvement, team performances and results improve. The difficult area is what goes on in the six inches between the ears of fifteen individuals, all with different personalities.

Motivating Linford Christie to win the Olympic 100 metres final is relatively easy, it's a matter

between the coach and the athlete, a one-to-one situation building a trust and confidence over many months of training for a specific goal. The difficulties with team motivation are those often missed by the spectator. Simon Morris finishes a night shift as a policeman, snatches a few minutes sleep on the coach — not the ideal preparation for a League game. Tim and Ian Smith both have new born babies and disturbed nights sleep to contend with.

I can assure you that the players do take the game very seriously and feel a great loyalty to the Club. We talk about their personal motivation and game preparation and I'm hopeful that we shall see an improvement in this area of the players preparation.

Of course there will be no problem with motivation for today's game, another local derby with Bristol. As well as the two league points at stake, there will be an opportunity for players of both sides to make a claim for Divisional places. With the England World Cup squad not playing in this year's Divisional Championships, there are more opportunities than normal to play for.

ENJOY THE GAME!

**BARRIE CORLESS**

**Peter Arnold cont.**

will leave Kingsholm at around 11.00am and will cost £6.00. Tickets on sale at the office as usual.

**WE GET LETTERS**

If you consider that the tone of the following letter is a little more, well, let's say 'familiar', than usually printed in these columns, it's because Mollie Harris, from North Upton Lane, who was kind enough to write it to me, is an old friend. Having suffered under her direction in quite a different organisation, I can confirm that she is a stickler for detail (not to mention pernickety) when the occasion warrants it, and none the worse for that.

However, the point she's making is a very valid and welcome one, and I'm glad to give it wider currency:

*Dear Peter,*

*Belated birthday greetings. I trust you celebrated in style - pity the score just failed to give you that extra fillip.*

*A request from Bob, Peter and myself, and no doubt many others who watch regularly from our footage in the Stand.*

*Please will you pass to the appropriate ears, our thanks for this season's ball-boys. They are a joy!*

*Keen, unobstrusive, always a ball is where it should be, and they are smart with it. Am I right in recognising the Crypt colours? Long may they continue in like vein.*

*You well know my pechant for detail and the irritation of minor tasks not being performed correctly, and to me, the foregoing boys had outgrown their enthusiasm for the job - and I trust that's not just a remark from a somewhat mature in years but perennially young at heart female.*

*May I say I am thoroughly enjoying my rugby - and a real supporter as we attend every away match too, apart from when galivanting off to foreign parts precludes that pleasure.*

*Regards, Mollie.*

I do have the answer to her query. Yes, Mollie, you're quite right. The ball-boys' colours which you note, are those of the Crypt School. In fact, I'm told that the lads concerned are from Old Cryptians RFC Under-16 squad. New cherry-and-white strips are on order, and will be in evidence soon.

Mollie is also right in her contention that a good squad of ball-boys can make a significant difference to a game. It's quite easy to lose several minutes play if they're not quite as quick off the mark as they should be.

Conversely, an efficient set of lads are an asset to any club, and I'm glad to add my congratulations to those of Mrs Harris, with my thanks to her for pointing out a factor which I had noticed myself.

**WE GET LETTERS (2)**

Just one more reference to the absence of John Hawkins from our Saturday afternoon radios, then I think we must abandon the topic.

I did write, in our last programme, that I would be glad if someone from BBC Radio Gloucestershire told me the reasons for the decision. Well, now someone has: no less than the station's Managing Editor himself, the amiable Steve Egginton. Here's his letter:

*Dear Peter,*

*I would be grateful if you could find room in the Gloucester RFC magazine for the following comments.*

*BBC Radio Gloucestershire devotes more airtime to Gloucester RFC than any other organisation and continues to do so, despite the impression given recently in the programme.*

*We still have a reporter at all Gloucester matches, giving regular updates, and we still have comprehensive previews and reviews of Gloucester's games. What we have stopped doing is a full commentary on home matches.*

*If I thought there was a demand for full match commentaries, we would still be doing them. But our research shows there was only a very small audience for full commentary, though I have no quarrel at all about the quality of coverage which John Hawkins gave us.*

*I imagine most full-blooded Glos supporters will be at the match, not listening to it at home. For those who can't get to Kingsholm, we still have regular score updates.*

*I promise this: if there is a demand for commentary, I will happily reconsider. But so far, only a handful of people have complained about the new arrangement.*

*What I do hope to do is improve our coverage of away games, for the fans who can't travel.*

*Finally let me make it clear that BBC Radio Gloucestershire's support for Gloucester RFC remains absolute, as does its support for all clubs and organisations which carry the county's hopes and aspirations.*

*Steve Egginton, Managing Editor*

I take Steve's point about home matches, although we have something of a 'Catch 22' here, in that anyone who can't get along to games isn't likely to be reading this programme either, so probably won't register his disapproval or otherwise.

My own stance is that I regret being deprived of the wit and wisdom of John Hawkins. Personally, I'm making observations about quality rather than quantity.

Having said that, I did make a point of listening to the whole of the relevant period of broadcasting last



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Saturday, and I'm bound to say that, subjectively, it appears that both Gloucester City and Cheltenham Town soccer clubs got longer periods of commentary than Gloucester RFC did up at Sale, and good luck to them.

I imagine that this is a function of the relative expense to the station of covering away matches to that incurred by games played at home, and I welcome Steve Egginton's intention to seek to improve matters in that respect. After all, it's when Gloucester are playing away that most of us are chewing our fingernails.

One mischievous thought did occur to me however. I wonder what reaction his colleagues in Birmingham would get from their listeners if — say — Birmingham & Solihull and Barker's Butts from the Midlands leagues got bigger coverage than Aston Villa?

After all, whatever our current trauma, we are one of the top ten Rugby Union sides in the country.

#### KEEP CLEAR!

I'm sorry to be boring about this, but I do have to keep reminding you to stand away from gangways and steps on big occasions like this one. The Emergency Services would be much happier if you did.

Not that the Club is complaining. Everyone did their best to co-operate during the Bath game, we're grateful for that, and are confident that things will continue to go swimmingly.

While on the subject of accommodation for supporters of both clubs, may I remind you that Centre Stand seats will be reserved for Stand Members until 20 minutes before kick-off today. The system worked well for Bath, and it's the intention to continue it on appropriate occasions.

#### WORD OF WARNING

Our efficient Admin Lady, Geraldine Peake, had a nasty shock last week. On returning to her car, she found that a window had been smashed and her radio stolen. What she finds difficult to understand is that she had parked in the small area immediately outside the office, and the broken window was the one facing the wall, and no more than six or eight inches away from it. So the idiot who prepared the dastardly deed was hardly of lock forward proportions.

So a word of warning is appropriate. Make sure your security is as tight as possible when you visit Kingsholm. Today's car thieves are no respectors of persons, places or occasions.

I suppose things aren't so bad on match days when there is always plenty of people about. However, if you're dropping into the Social Club during the week, or on Sunday lunchtime, or going into the office to pick up a ticket or something, then don't be tempted to think that you'll only be away for a minute. These days, that's all it takes.

#### WE'RE UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

I've had some very interesting correspondence from an academic gentleman called Andy White recently. He's a Senior Lecturer at the North Hampshire Business School of the Farnborough College of Technology.

It appears that Andy has become tired of being just plain 'Mister' and has ambitions to acquire the title of 'Doctor'. Accordingly he's preparing to write his Ph.D. thesis. His proposal has been accepted by the University of Leicester, and is to consist of a study of the processes of 'commercialisation and professionalisation' (his words, not mine, I'm glad to say) in Rugby Union Football.

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## THE GLOUCESTER RUGBY FOOTBALL

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### *Peter Arnold cont.*

Oddly, you may think, for a chap operating under the aegis of the University of Leicester, he has chosen to centre his research around Gloucester RFC. He insists that the decision is based around his contention that Gloucester has resisted those processes for longer, and more effectively, than any other First Division club, and has nothing at all to do with the fact that he's been supporting Gloucester for several years now, and of course, we believe him, though thousands wouldn't.

As anyone who has been involved in this sort of process knows, aspiring Ph.D's. have to have a couple of supervisors to guide them along the way. Andy White has acquired the services of a couple of crackers.

They are Professor Eric Dunning and Dr Kenneth Sheard, the authors of 'Barbarians, Gentlemen and Players', which is a study of the historical and social development of rugby from its folk football roots until 1976, and regarded as the definitive work on the subject. In a way, Andy's work will take over where the earlier book leaves off, because the processes which he is to study took off at just about that time.

For once, the Gloucestershire Library Arts and Museum Service has let me down. They don't have a copy of 'Barbarians, Gentlemen and Players'. However, they do ask me to say that if anyone wants to read it, it could be borrowed on their behalf from outside the County.

I would have thought that a quiet word with Andy White while he's in the Brunswick Road Reference Library pursuing his researches, could result in an acquisition of the title, possibly autographed. They may not be able to drop that hint, but I can on their behalf.

One reason for telling you all this, apart from the general interest, is that Andy estimates that his research is going to take about four years, and he's quite sure that he's going to have to talk to an awful lot of people, with all kinds of involvement with the Club, past and present. So don't be surprised if you hear from him sometime between now and 1998.

One more thing. Andy writes: "In terms of outcome, the substantial material gathered could contribute to the publication of a club history."

Now *that's* a project I've had in mind for years. How about a collaboration, Andy?

#### **KINGS OF THE 'OLD CROWN'**

Call from Tim Smith the other day. No, not that one, this one is the cheerful fellow who runs the excellent 'Old Crown' in Westgate Street. It had to do with the 'Fantasy Rugby' system which 'The Times' is running this season.

Apparently, one has to choose the 15 players one thinks will score most points in the season, according to a rather complex handicapping system. In all, the newspaper has received a mind-boggling 330,000 entries, which is a fair proportion of that august journal's entire readership. Each Wednesday the leading 50 entries are published in the paper's sports section.

If you saw 'The Times' during the first week of the competition you may have noticed that an outfit called 'Kingsholm Kings' had come in at No. 49. Last week they had progressed to No. 38.

On Wednesday of this week they had slipped to No. 56, but all in all, it's not a bad record out of a third of a million entries!

Now I Can Reveal, as they say in the tabloids, that 'Kingsholm Kings' are none other than Tim Smith's

coterie from the 'Old Crown'. And if you were to assume that the selections are the product of the combined acumen of Tim's highly knowledgeable clientele, you'd be quite wrong. In fact, the pub has no fewer than 26 entries, some of whom are also doing reasonably well, but none quite in the class of the guvnor's own gang.

Nice one, Tim! There must be something in this Sam Smith's beer.

#### **THE SAVAGE APPROACH**

No, nothing to do with Viv Wooley's coaching methods, just a reference to the Young Master who is doing us the honour of acting as Match Mascot today.

His name is Thomas Savage, and he lives in Abbeydale, with his sister, Jessica, and his Mum, Lesley. He attends Heron School. At the ripe old age of seven, he has acquired a passionate interest in most sports, but rugby is definitely his No. 1.

If Derek Brown is here today (and when is he not?), he might like to know that, in young Tom Savage, we have a budding Conservation Officer, his non-sporting interests being animals and nature. Better watch your back, Derek. Someone is going to be after your job in a few years time!

Thanks, Tom, for running out for us. Hope you have a highly enjoyable day.

And, incidentally, Margaret Nelson, Mike Burton's Administration chief, tells me that she might still be able to find room for one or two lads — or lassies, don't forget — for her Match Mascot list. If you have a youngster who may be interested, you can contact Margaret on 0452 419666. She'll be delighted to give you all the relevant info.

#### **LET THE PLANE TAKE THE STRAIN**

January 14th seems an awful long time away, but we do have the expensive Christmas season in between, so it doesn't do any harm to give you a little advance warning.

That's the day we play the return fixture against West Hartlepool, and the intention is to lay on a flight to points north, as we did for the away fixture against Newcastle Gosforth last season.

I also hear rumours about a plot to hold a raffle, enabling some lucky supporters to win a flight and a ticket for the game. That's still "very much in the air", says Geraldine, who obviously isn't one to resist a bad pun if she can find one.

Anyway, watch this space. Thought you'd like to have the news early.

#### **SOUR GRAPES?**

Mr D. King, of Dudridge, is vastly incensed by a letter which appeared in the 'Daily Telegraph' following the Bath game. The writer apparently took exception to a comment in that paper's respected 'Peterborough' column, which referred to the Kingsholm crowd as 'good humoured'. His own contribution attempted to refute that comment with the use of what he fondly imagines is humour.

Isn't it strange how we only get these criticisms from a minority of Bath supporters when their team has been up against it? And, it is only a minority. My experience of the travelling Bath fans is that they're as fair-minded and cheerful as any others.

I'm not going to dignify the letter by repeating it here. It simply isn't worth it, and anyway, there could be a



copyright problem if I did. I'll simply ask who you're going to believe: A highly regarded columnist like 'Peterborough', or a badly-frightened opposition supporter?

I do note, however, that the correspondent gives his address as 'Westbury, Wilts'.

Does it really? Bath jolly nearly did, too.

#### **TAILPIECE**

Nice one, this week from no less a personage than Roger Payne, eminent JP, architect and thespian.

It appears that his usual happy little mafia, as is there

went, visited the 'Jockey' ('Kingsholm Inn', to the uninformed) on the day of the Bath game for their habitual pre-match larynx lubricator. As you will imagine, the place was heaving.

One of the party, presumably doing the driving, settled for a half of lager. Unfortunately, just as they got to the bar, the pub ran out of half-pint glasses.

"We've got a lot of ladies in today", came the explanation.

"Ah!" came the response. "Must be Bath ladies. Our girls drink in pints!"