

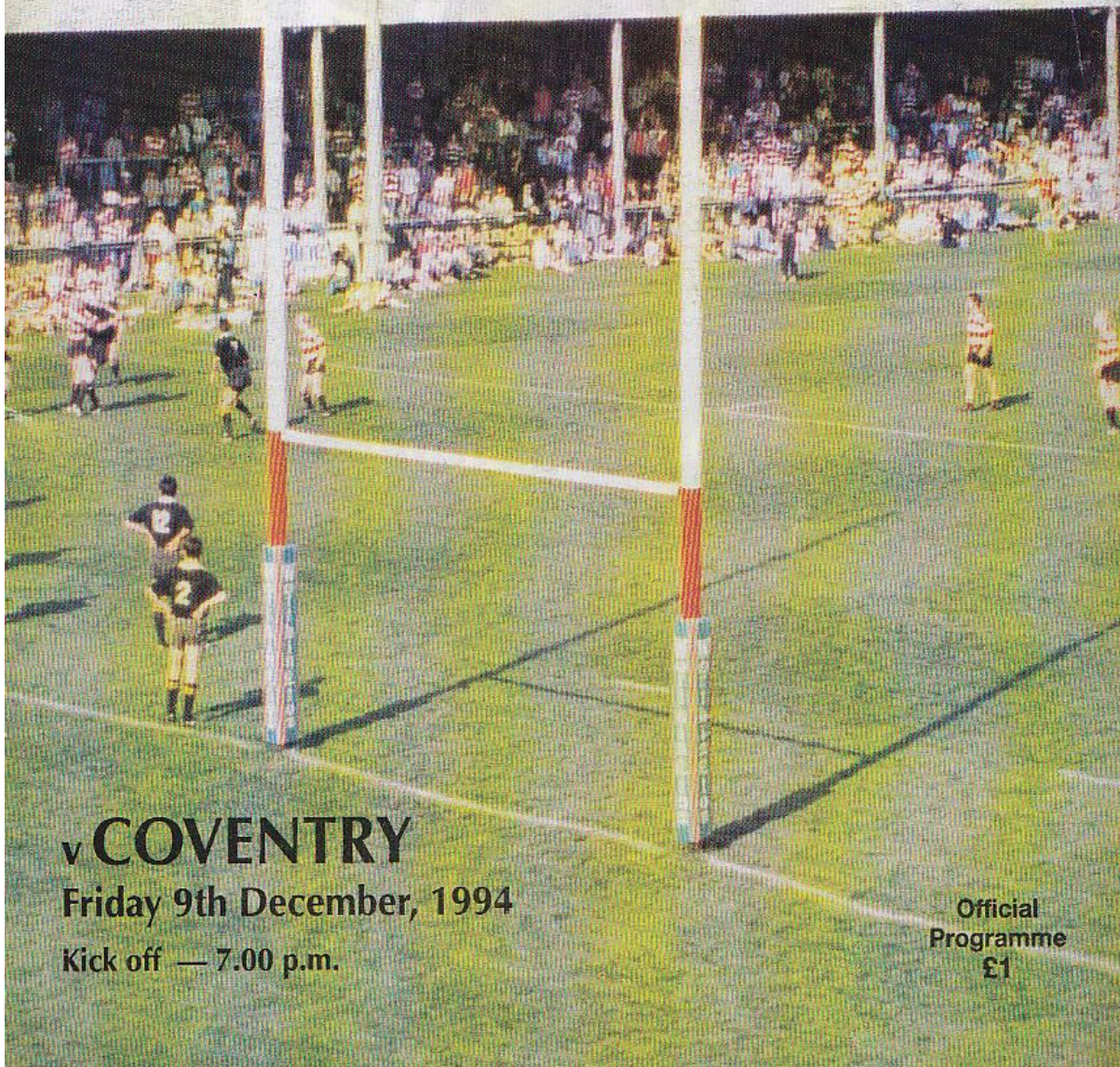
GLOUCESTER RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB



FOUNDED 1873



Official Club Sponsors



v **COVENTRY**

Friday 9th December, 1994

Kick off — 7.00 p.m.

Official
Programme
£1

..... Peter Arnold

The Lighter Side

There used to be a saying, applicable to this time of the year, which referred to the 'Dark Days Before Christmas' Highly appropriate, too, but I did think that it was going to extremes to test the old adage by putting the lights out for nearly three-quarters of an hour during the Bridgend game. I am, however, assured that Doug Wadley has put more tokens in the meter this evening, so all should be well.

If we had to choose an occasion to lighten our darkness at this gloomy season, we could hardly do better than select the visit of Coventry to Kingsholm. They are undoubtedly one of our oldest and most respected opposing sides, and most of us can recall epic encounters at both Coundon Road and Kingsholm. It's worth recalling that Coventry stood in our path on each campaign which culminating in Gloucester winning, or at least sharing, the Cup. Two of those games depended, in the end, on last-minute drop goals, one by Eric Stephens, and the other by Brian Russell. Tonight's welcome visitors always have been a team worth playing and one which has to be beaten, because they're never going to make things easy for you.

The names rise easily to the imagination. George Cole, Phil Judd, and the late and much-missed Peter Robbins, certainly one of the very best after-dinner speakers I ever heard.

Coventry always seemed to be able to supply a flying winger or two. Peter Jackson, David Duckham, and another luminary who won ten Caps in the '70's, but whose name escapes me for the moment. Ah! I remember now - it was a young hopeful called Barrie

Corless.

Coventry, sadly, have slipped from their usual high pinnacle of achievement of recent seasons, but there are now signs of revival, and a jolly good thing too. Most of us would agree that 'Cov's' rightful place is in the First Division, and we'd all be very glad to see them back where they belong.

So Barrie Corless is by no means the only person on the ground to be very pleased to see the Midlanders here this evening. It's the time of year to exchange greetings, and perhaps the odd celebratory beverage, with old friends, and we all hope that Coventry have a thoroughly enjoyable evening with us.

NOT OUR FAULT

All right, so I pulled Doug's leg gently, above, but one factor concerning the lights failure didn't get the publicity it deserves, and is worth recording here.

The fact is that the sudden black-out was emphatically not the Club's fault. The defect arose in the box which is part of Midlands Electricity's responsibility, and to which Gloucester RFC has no access. In those circumstances, repairs were effected commendably quickly. I'm told that arrangements have now been made so that - heaven forbid - the fault recurs, matters will be put right even more promptly.

Obviously, everyone regrets that the situation arose, but it shouldn't happen again. Our lights remain the most sophisticated in Europe, and we're rather proud of them.

Cont on page 12

**THE
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BEST FOR THE 1994/1995 SEASON
AND WELCOMES ITS GUESTS
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WHO'S DOING THE JOB THIS SEASON?

The people in charge for 1994/5 certainly have a job on their hands. For your information, here they are.

President: Canon H. M. Hughes B.A.

Vice Presidents: Roy Morris, Tom Day

Chairman: Alan Brinn.

Vice Chairman: Mike Nicholls.

Hon. Secretary and Treasurer: Doug Wadley.

Hon. Fixtures Secretary: Mike Nicholls.

Hon. Team Secretary: Eric Stephens

Hon. Colts Secretary: Reg Collins.

Committee: John Beaman, Mickey Booth, Bob Clewes, Terry Close, Mervyn Elway, John Fidler, Peter Ford,

David Foyle, Jim Holder, Jim Jarrett, Andy Mitchell, Cecil Pope, Trevor Pritchard, Fred Reed, Alan Townsend.

Players' Representative: Jerry Perrins.

Director of Rugby: Barrie Corless.

Coach: Viv Wooley

Captain: First XV: Andy Deacon.

Captain: United: Bobby Fowke.

Captain: Under 21 XV: Phil Greening.

Commercial Management:

Mike Burton Management Ltd.

Administration Officer: Geraldine Peake.

Golden Gamble Administrator: Karen Dudden

(Tel: 0452 419666)

Programme Editor: (who welcomes contributions)

Peter Arnold, 74 Victoria Street, Gloucester.

Tel: 0452 380481.

Telephones: Complex: 520901.

Social Club: 528385

Office: 381087

How Ebenezer Scrooge



Sees It

"Bah ! Humbug", snarled Scrooge.

"You can't mean that," quavered Barrie Cratchitt, "Everyone loves 15-man rugby."

"Humbug ! You and Tiny Viv are spoiling traditional Gloucester play. If I could work my will, every man who walks around crying '15-man rugby' would be choked with his own season ticket and buried with a corner flag through his heart !" And, with that, he grumbled off home to his lonely bed.

But he didn't sleep well. His slumber seemed to be disturbed by spectral referee's whistles. A hollow cry of 'Cheat !' kept ringing in his ears. Eventually, he gave up, and sat up in bed groping for the light switch. It was then that he found he wasn't alone. At the foot of the bed stood the figure of an enormous prop forward. His scrum cap hung forlornly over one ear. He didn't appear to have shaved for a week. With a thrill of horror, Scrooge realised that he could see right through him. "Who - who are you ?" he trembled.

"I AM THE GHOST OF RUGBY YET TO COME !" intoned the Spirit, speaking in small capital letters, as all the best ghosts do.

"Humbug !" cried Scrooge. "You're nothing but an attack of indigestion. I thought that Clubhouse cheese roll tasted a bit elderly."

"WELL, I DIDN'T ALWAYS DO THIS JOB," admitted the Spectre. "BUT SINCE THE OLD SECOND ROW DONKEY WENT OUT OF STYLE, I'VE HAD TO TAKE PART TIME WORK WHERE I CAN GET IT "

"What do you want with me ?" Scrooge's question evoked an orthodontically challenged smile from the Spirit. The effect was ghastly. "I HAVE BEEN SENT TO SHOW YOU THE ERROR OF YOUR WAYS !", and with that, he placed a hand the size of a melon on Scrooge's shoulder, plucked him out of bed, and flew him over the rooftops of Gloucester, causing Scrooge to lose the last remnants of his cheese roll, and eventually setting him on his feet in a large,

open space.

"I know this place !", cried Scrooge. "I've spent most of my life here. Why it's Kingsholm. They have been letting it go lately. There are bare patches on the pitch. And the Stand could do with a lick of paint. But why is the Clubhouse boarded up ?"

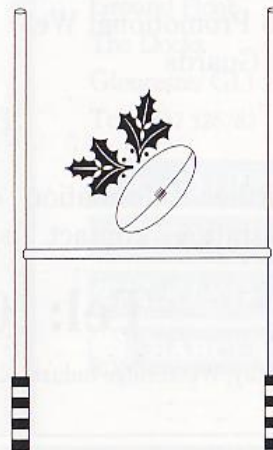
"NO ONE COMES HERE ANY MORE. AFTER THE CLUB DROPPED OUT OF THE NATIONAL LEAGUE, THE GOOD PLAYERS STARTED TO GO TO LYDNEY AND CHELTENHAM. SO THE CROWDS STOPPED COMING, TOO. THEN THE SHED FELL DOWN. BUT YOU HAVEN'T SEEN THE WORST. LOOK AT THAT NOTICE !"

Scrooge looked and screamed. "*PURCHASED BY TESCO FOR GLOUCESTER'S 19th HYPERMARKET !* And look ! Look at the ends of the pitch. Soccer posts at Kingsholm ! Soccer posts !"

And he woke up, still screaming, in his own bed.

Scrooge was a changed man after that. It was always said of him that if any man knew how to enjoy a rugby match, Ebenezer Scrooge did. And if the backs scored all the tries, so much the better. He occasionally hired a Hospitality box for his friends and clients, and became one of Barrie Cratchitt's warmest admirers.

"God Bless Us !", said Tiny Viv. "God Bless Us, Every One !"



Peter Arnold cont.

'TIS THE SEASON....

Well, almost, anyway. The sort of holiday week-end we have this year used to be known as 'The poor man's Christmas', on account of the fact that one didn't have to buy a Sunday joint as well as a festive bird, which is all to the good in these expensive times. Unfortunately, it also gets in the way of a rugby week-end. This, combined with the away draw in the Cup, means that this is the last First XV game at Kingsholm before we all break up for the hols.

Accordingly, this is the final chance I shall have to express the usual Seasonal good wishes to all and sundry. This I most wholeheartedly do.

From the Officers and Committee of Gloucester RFC, and by no means least, from the players and coaches, a very Merry Christmas to everyone. Gloucester is proud of the support it receives, and rightly so. Even the National Press has been acknowledging that we have the most knowledgeable supporters in the country, as well as the most vociferous. They are, emphatically, an integral part of the Club and all it stands for, and no one appreciates that more than the people who play and work for it.

May I add my personal good wishes ? Thanks to all the people who tell me anecdotes, write about points at issue, correct my mistakes, and generally supply me with ammunition to keep these pages filled, week by week. The job would be a lot more difficult, and not half so much fun, without such ammunition.

So, have a great Christmas, everybody. I'll see you at the Moseley game on New Year's Eve.

CUP TICKETS

At the time of writing (Wednesday), there are still some tickets available for next Saturday's Cup match at Wakefield. Furthermore, Doug Wadley has now produced a few Stand tickets from somewhere. If you haven't got yours yet, I'd certainly recommend you call in and see Geraldine in the Office and rectify the omission, because it's an all-ticket

match, and I wouldn't like to see anyone go all that way and then not be able to get in.

On the transport front, I'm told that we still need to sell a few more seats, at £8.50, to make a third coach a viable proposition. However many vehicles finally make the trip, they will leave Kingsholm at 9.30am, and depart from Wakefield at around 5.30pm.

If you're making your own way there, I gather that the Wakefield ground is just about as far away from the town centre as Kingsholm is from the Cross, so you shouldn't have too much trouble finding it. And don't, for the life of you, forget that it's a 2.30 kick-off.

While on the subject, we're not the only Gloucestershire side in and around Wakefield that day. As you've probably read, Lydney are away to Sandal - who I notice lost to Stoke, last Saturday - in the same competition.

It's only right that we, at Gloucester, wish our friendly neighbours every success in their Northward safari. Two teams in the hat for the next round would be a consummation devoutly to be wished: as long as we don't get drawn against each other. Now *ther'es* a sobering thought for you.

WAKEFIELD - STOP PRESS

Hospitality Lunch for Cup Match!!!

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NOT SUCH A BLEAK MIDWINTER

Of course, you don't have to wait until New Year's Eve to watch some good-class rugby. On the Wednesday before Christmas, the 21st, as ever was, the U21's entertain their opposite numbers from the fine old Torquay club. Our next generation of players have been having a most interesting baptism of fire in their first every-week season. What's more, they have been playing some highly attractive rugby.

Highly recommended if you want to get away from the Christmas chores for an evening.

LAST CHANCE

I don't know whether it's just me, but I seem to have noticed a fair few girls around wearing Gloucester rugby shirts lately. Which could indicate that there's an idea there if you want to impress a daughter, sister, typist, (or anything) this Christmas.

If the notion appeals, then nothing could be simpler. Simply trot along and see Allan Townsend or John Beaman, before, during or after the match, and they'll be glad to dispense goodies.

The range makes Santa's Grotto look like an entry in a car boot sale. Everything from mugs to body warmers, sweaters to keyrings. You could spend a pittance or a sizeable amount. Do go along and suss things out. It

could solve a problem or two.

TERRY'S TROTTING OUT

Our Match Mascot this evening bears a well-known Gloucester rugby name, although I don't know whether there's any relationship.

He's Terry Hemmings, who is eleven years old and lives in Sussex Gardens, Hucclecote. He goes to Brockworth School, and quite apart from being dead keen on his rugby, also goes a bundle on swimming and the other sort of football. He has three brothers; Gareth is sixteen, Jamie is six and Bobby is five.

Four growing lads at Christmas! That's a fair old handfull for the Hemmings Mum, Jill, and I expect gives Steve, their Dad his moments too. I'll bet it's great fun, though.

However, it's Terry who's in the spotlight this evening. I learn that he's already making the most of it, strutting around three inches taller than he was last week. And why not?

Thanks for doing the job for us young Terence. If your rugby career lasts as long as your namesake, Curly, you won't be doing so bad.

Keep in mind that it's always worth getting your name down if you have a young lad or lass who would like to run out with the team, wearing the Gloucester strip. Margaret Nelson will be glad to give you full details if you ring 0452 419666.

Cont on page 20

THE GLOUCESTER RUGBY FOOTBALL

Club Shop



CHRISTMAS COMETH!!!

Ideal Presents for all the family . . .

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OPEN BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER EVERY GAME

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Peter Arnold cont.

...AND 'MERRY CHRISTMAS' FROM MBM, TOO

While talking about young Terry's Big Night to Margaret, she suggested that I also relay seasonal good wishes to everyone from the Mike Burton organisation. This I am very happy to do, while also returning our thanks for the work everyone at Bastion House does on our behalf. Life would be much more difficult for Gloucester RFC - and for me, for that matter - without their friendly help and co-operation.

So from Mike Burton, Margaret, Karen (who organises 'Golden Gamble') a very Merry Christmas to all.

And talking of 'Golden Gamble', have you had your quidsworth yet ? It would be a good time to win a few pounds, wouldn't it ?

THANKS FROM THE PRICES

I had a nice note from the family of the late Jack Price, whose death we reported a few programmes ago. They asked me to thank everyone for their condolences, and for the few words in the programme. They also say that the piece and the sympathy they received as a result, did help get them through a sad time.

That's all right, ladies and gentlemen. It was good that we could be of service.

GETTING A COMPLEX ABOUT THE COMPLEX

Apparently, some Members who are accustomed to use the Complex after a match are still under a misapprehension about the occasions when it is available for their use.

Really, the situation is quite simple. When Gloucester are the home side - when it's a 'Gloucester' match, in fact, all Members entitled to use the Complex are extremely welcome to do so. On other occasions they may not be.

In effect, when an organisation such as the South West Under 21 authorities, who were here last Monday evening, come to play at Kingsholm, they do, in fact, simply hire the ground, and pay for the privilege. They can therefore, use the Complex as part of the deal, and entertain anyone they like therein. That can result in Gloucester Members being denied admission, unless they have the appropriate invitation. Nothing the Club can do about it. It is, as I say, part of the deal.

In Doug Wadley's note to me on the subject, he writes "I hope this clarifies the situation, and that the Members concerned will accept the situation."

I do, too. After all, no one's going to be short of a drink, are they ? There are three

other bars they can patronise.

WE'RE BEING SKYJACKED !

While writing these notes, the news came through that Sky are to cover the Gloucester v. Wasps game at Kingsholm on January 7th. If you're not in the satellite-owning class, then take note that the game will therefore commence at 2.15pm. I will repeat that: TWO FIFTEEN, so don't get caught out and miss half the game.

What is it about Sky and Gloucester v. London clubs ? Last time round, they covered Harlequins at the Stoop, and we won that one. Omen ?

STOPOVER

Call from Andy Mitchell to tell me that he's planning to run one of his celebrated 'Stopover' trips to West Hartlepool on January 14th. The idea is to go up by coach, fairly early on the Saturday morning, stay at a hotel overnight, and meander back on Sunday. Sounds like a real snip at £40.00, and Andy tells me that he's already filled half the coach.

Sounds like an Alka-Seltzer job to me, but if that doesn't deter you, you can get details, and make your booking, at the Office.

TAILPIECE

Did you notice that Christmas pudding flavoured beer went on sale across the County this week ?

Not at Kingsholm, it hasn't.

*A Merry Christmas
to all our readers*

Hello Mum

Ed Martin

While the idea of "league tables" in rugby can be traced back to the early days of Bill Bailey's tenure as rugby writer at *The Citizen* over 100 years ago, Rupert Cherry, Bailey's successor at St. John's Lane, gave an airing to the subject in his column published in the "Football Final" of Saturday April 9, 1949.

This is the system, "RC" wrote. Forty-five of the leading clubs are in three divisions. Each team starts with 50 points, and points are added for an away win (5), a home win (4) and an away draw (1). A draw at home means no change., an away loss the deduction of two points, and a home loss the deduction of 3 points.

Promotion and relegation of one team from each division operates on the last Saturday of each month.

Worked out this way, Gloucester finished last month second from the top of the second division with 76 points. Waterloo, who were top with 77 points, won promotion to the first division.

Last week's matches, with Gloucester losing two points for their away defeat at Llanelly (no "I" in those days) meant that they dropped down to fifth place.

The results of games between any two of the 45 clubs count, irrespective of what division the clubs are in, and the idea of deducting points for losses is to prevent clubs with the most fixtures from having an advantage.

Some clubs have more home matches than away, hence the difference in points for home and away games.

The authors of the scheme, Mr. R.W. Stratton and Mr. R.G. Stratton, say that they hope to meet the expense of compiling the tables by a levy on newspapers who agree to publish them.

There are arguments both for and against this league table idea, Rupert Cherry concluded. But I will not express any personal opinion at the moment because I want to know what the Gloucester Rugby public thinks.

There were, of course, differing views on the subject. Seven days later the *Citizen* published two views - one from each side of the fence. In favour was A.B. Powey...

Sir - As a strong rigger supporter I say "Yes" to league tables. There most probably would be complications, particularly in arranging fixtures between the teams who would rank in their respective classes. To make it fully successful I think it necessary that games be played only between clubs of the same division, with, perhaps a few friendlies added to fill open dates. True it would

foster greater enthusiasm generally for the game, an incentive to players, and a great thrill for supporters to watch the league progress of their club. Promotion and relegation could be added as a further interest.

Against the idea was D. Aston.... Sir - With regard to your comments on starting Rugby Union tables, who is to put the clubs into their tables? Secondly, we should then see a scrambling by clubs to get the stars so as to keep them in the best position. Thirdly, the Universities would have to keep their own players and that would mean that clubs like Lydney would be without the services of their own players. After all Rugby is not quite as certain a soccer and some results are, to say the least, startling. If we must have changes let them better the game so as to give us games like we saw against Leicester and Llanelly and less like we saw against Cheltenham.

Well at least Mr. Aston prophesied the movement of some players between clubs!

All this conjecture about the tables happened a few months before a visit made by the Gloucester club to Bedford. That match, on Saturday October 1, 1949 saw Gloucester well beaten by a 28-0 margin. The following week, Bill Bailey reminisced in *The Citizen* on what was Gloucester's heaviest defeat by an English club since World War II ended...

If it is any consolation to Gloucester Rugby followers it may be interesting to recall an occasion when the Bedford club experienced a far more decisive reverse at Kingsholm some 44 years ago. The actual date of the match was November 5, 1905 and it was the first time the rival team had met.

Gloucester, though fielding short of two of their international, W. Johns (capt) and R.D. Gent - had a brilliant attacking side doing duty.

The strength of the combination was reflected in the prolific scoring, the Kingsholm men piling up the remarkable score of 8 goals, 4 tries (52 pts) to 1 goal (5 pts). Today's values would make that 76-7. Of the twelve tries registered, ten were credited to players in the back division - A. Hudson (4), E. Hall (3), "Whacker" Smith (2) and J. Harrison (1). The other try getter was Bert Parham (2). All the goals were kicked by George Romans.

For the record, the full Gloucester team that walloped Bedford that day 89 years ago was: G. Romans; C. Smith (capt), E. Hall, J. Harrison and A. Hudson; J. Stephens and A.E. Wood; A. Hawker, B. Parham, G. Matthews, G. Vears, J. Jewell, H. Collins, J. Merchant and W. Holder.

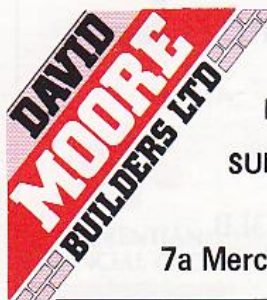
FIRST FIFTEEN RESULTS AND FIXTURES

HOME Matches are indicated in CAPITALS

			Gloucester					Opponent					
			Try	Con	Pen	DG	Pts	Try	Con	Pen	DG	Pts	
Aug	6	Hamiltons	L	4	0	0	1	23	3	3	1	1	27
	9	Milnerton	W	4	3	3	1	38	1	0	2	0	11
	12	Belville	W	6	4	0	1	41	1	1	0	0	7
	16	Stellenbosch University	W	3	1	2	1	26	0	0	3	0	9
Sep	3	LYDNEY	W	6	4	2	0	44	0	0	0	0	0
	6	Stroud	W	11	4	0	0	63	1	1	0	0	7
	10	+ Wasps	L	1	0	1	0	8	7	2	2	0	45
	17	+ WEST HARTLEPOOL	W	7	5	1	0	48	0	0	4	0	12
	24	+ Leicester	L	0	0	1	1	6	1	1	3	0	16
Oct	1	+ BATH	L	1	1	1	0	10	2	1	1	0	15
	8	+ Sale	L	1	0	2	1	14	1	1	3	0	16
	15	+ BRISTOL	W	1	1	4	0	19	1	0	4	0	17
	22	+ Northampton	L	0	0	2	0	6	0	0	3	0	9
	29	+ ORRELL	W	0	0	2	1	9	0	0	2	0	6
Nov	5	+ Harlequins	W	2	2	0	0	14	1	1	1	0	10
	8	Cardiff	L	3	1	0	0	17	2	2	2	0	20
	19	CANTERBURY (NZ)	L	1	1	0	0	7	12	5	0	0	70
	25	BRIDGEND	W	7	5	0	0	45	0	0	0	0	0
	30	CLIFTON	W	6	3	0	0	36	1	1	2	0	12
Dec	-3	Bedford	L	2	2	0	0	14	1	1	3	0	16
	9	COVENTRY											
	17	* Wakefield											
	26	Lydney											
	31	MOSELEY											
Jan	7	+ WASPS											
	14	+ West Hartlepool											
	20	Exeter											
	28	* (Pilkington Cup Round 5-TBA)											
Feb	4	Rugby											
	11	+ LEICESTER											
	17	Pontypool											
	25	WATERLOO											
Mar	4	+ Bath											
	11	NORTHERN TRANSVAAL											
	17	Newport											
	25	+ SALE											
Apr	1	London Scottish											
	8	+ Bristol											
	15	+ NORTHAMPTON											
	22	+ Orrell											
	29	+ HARLEQUINS											

	Total	Home	Away
Played	20	8	12
Won	11	6	5
Lost	9	2	7
Draw	0	0	0
Points For	488	218	270
Points Against	326	133	193
Winning Percentage55.00	75.00	41.67
Tries Scored66	29	37
Tries Allowed35	16	19

*Pilkington Cup
+Courage Clubs Championships



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