

GLOUCESTER

RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB



FOUNDED 1873



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v ORRELL
SATURDAY 17TH FEBRUARY, 1996
Kick off - 3.00 p.m.



OFFICIAL
PROGRAMME
£1

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GLOUCESTER (Cherry/White)

15. Gareth Fenwick
14. Paul Holford
13. Don Caskie
12. Martyn Roberts
11. Mike Lloyd
10. Martin Kimber
9. Scott Benton
1. Tony Windo
2. Phil Greening
3. Andy Deacon
4. Rob Fidler
5. Dave Sims †
6. Pete Glanville
7. Andy Stanley
8. Chris Raymond

Replacements:
Hilton Brown
Colin Gibson
Laurie Beck
Damian Cummins

**GLOUCESTER
RUGBY FOOTBALL
CLUB**

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Referee: G. Warren
RFU Bristol Society
Touch Judges:
N. Cousins & L. Jackson
RFU

† Captain



ORRELL

15. Steve Taberner
14. Dan Luger
13. Ian Wynn
12. Paul Johnston †
11. Graeme Smith
10. Alun Peacock
9. Austin Healey
1. Phil Winstanley
2. Martin Scott
3. Peter Mitchell
4. Chas Cusani
5. Steve Bibby
6. Jeff Huxley
7. Alec Bennett
8. Peter Anglesea

Replacements:
Richard Mathias
Lua Tuigamala
John Russell
Clive Cooper

Peter Arnold ...

BACK IN BUSINESS



BACK TO THE NITTY-GRITTY

We are gathered here today, in the face of this congregation, to join together Gloucester and Orrell in the cause of good rugby and the search for valuable League points. And not before time, either.

It won't come as a surprise to you that this is the sixth Saturday since we last attended a game at Kingsholm. Since West Hartlepool on January 6th, we've lost one home game to a hastily re-arranged one at Bristol, the Saturday after that was an away game at Waterloo. The 27th should have been the away Cup draw at Nottingham - replacing a scheduled home game with Rugby - but the weather intervened. On the 2nd of February we were badly let down by Pontypool, while last Saturday, instead of visiting Leicester, we fulfilled our Cup obligation at Nottingham. I imagine that the Management of the club are breathing a heartfelt sigh of relief today, because cash flow over the period has been, to quote a trenchant word from Mike Coley, 'zilch'.

At least the players have had a run-out or two in the meantime, although a little ring-rustiness was in evidence in the early stages of the Cup game. They would have wished a sterner test or two before facing the nitty-gritty of a League game against today's formidable and respected opponents, but let's not underestimate the performances since the West Hartlepool game.

Off the top of by head, Gloucester have scored over 110 points in the three games they've played in the interim, and scored over a dozen tries. And the opposition - Waterloo, Bristol and Nottingham - wasn't so inferior as to make that anything but a highly encouraging record. You don't score that many points in a trio of away games against First and Second Division opposition unless you've got a fair amount going for you.

Of course, we're not about to underestimate today's task. Gone are the days when Orrell relied heavily on a ginormous pack of forwards, Dewi Morris and, with all due respect, not a lot else. Anyone who has watched them lately will have been impressed with some genuine ideas, and a lot of speed around the park. And of course, they still know a great deal about forward play.

Furthermore, it's difficult to overestimate the importance of today's game, in this of all seasons. If Orrell were to win, then Gloucester would be deeper in the proverbial than anyone would like to contemplate. A Gloucester result wouldn't be quite so catastrophic from an Orrell point of view, but serious none the less, especially with proposed European competitions sprouting like couch grass. So there's a very great deal to play for.

But quite apart from all that, some of the pleasantest rugby occasions I have experienced have been in the company of Orrell supporters, invariably on licenced premises, and taking in quite a significant proportion of such establishments around the City centre. They do know and love their rugby up Wigan way, and are prepared to compare reminiscence and analysis with almost anyone, at the drop of a Boddington's glass. We welcome them all, players, officials and supporters, most sincerely, and hope they have a thoroughly enjoyable, not to say convivial, time with us.

As long as they don't actually win...

THE PITFALLS OF THE PROFESSIONAL

Being a professional rugby player isn't all fat pay packets and celebrity status. I was fascinated to read, in the Pink Un's new 'Ernie Elver' column the advice that, if you intend to do a U-turn in a busy Cheltenham street, you shouldn't do it in a marked car with your name plastered over the sides. I won't complete the quotation, because that would identify the erring player, and I've no wish to rub salt into any wounds.

I mention the story in order to bid welcome to the aforesaid 'Ernie Elver', whoever he, or she, might be. Keep going, Ernie. If you give us as much fun as your predecessor, Charlie Haddock, did, then you won't be doing so bad. How about writing a piece for our 'How So-and-so Sees it' page, sometime?

SO WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE ?

The forthcoming fixture situation has become involved, to say the least, so perhaps a recap is in order.

At least next Saturday's match is clear and unequivocal. That's when we entertain, if that's the right word, Wasps in the Quarter Final of the Pilkington Cup. This means, of course, that our arranged away trip to Bridgend falls by the wayside, which is a pity, but I suppose one can't have everything.

The following *Friday*, March 1st, we are down to play Swansea, at home, followed by a visit from The Army on *Tuesday* March 5th, but I suppose either, or both, of those games could be affected by what actually happens on Saturday, March 9th.

As you know, we lost our home League game against Bath to the weather on December 30th, which seems an indecently long time ago. After much toing, froing, negotiation, arbitration, and downright haggling, it was rearranged for Saturday March 9th, over Bath objections on the grounds they had more than three players committed to England Squad training on that day. All seemed well, but at the time of writing, Bath have renewed their objections, and the whole thing is in the melting pot again.

Of course, the situation may have been resolved by the time you read this. If the obstacles thrown up by Bath can't be overcome, then the likelihood is that the game will be played under lights, sometime in the week leading up to March 9th. That's why I say that both the Army game, and even possibly the Swansea match could be affected. We can only wait and see. If the game does go ahead on the 9th, we shall obviously not be visiting Exeter.

The next scheduled match after that is a home game against Cardiff on *Friday* March 15th, followed by a visit to Lydney on *Tuesday* March 19th. After that, things get equivocal again.

On Saturday March 23rd, we're down to visit Newport. However, it has been decided that we shall play our postponed League fixture at Leicester on that day. The snag here is that it's also Pilkington Cup Semi Final day, so if either Gloucester or Leicester (hopefully both) are still involved in that competition, then the rearranged game obviously won't be able to go ahead. If that happens, and it's very likely, then I just don't know when we shall play our game against the Tigers. Watch this space.

After that, we return to sanity. Unless, of course, something else gets in the way of this increasingly chaotic season. Ah well! It's only a game. They keep telling me.

WASPS NEXT WEEK

After all that, a word about arrangements for that fascinating encounter with Wasps in the Cup next Saturday.

Tickets for the game are available to Members right now, but they go on sale to the general public on Monday next, so if you are a Member and haven't acquired your passport to the game yet, then stand not upon the order of they going, and get along to see the Fair Geraldine as soon as possible.

I should also remind you that, as always, Pilkington Cup games are all-pay affairs. This is a rule of the Competition, and there's nothing Gloucester RFC can do about it. If you haven't got a ticket, you won't get in, even if you have been a Member since Digger Morris was a lad. So make sure you're not left out in the cold.

It would be a shame if you were, because the game could well be one to savour. Wasps beat us in the League at Kingsholm on October 14th, but I'm sure that anyone who was here, that day, would agree with me that the 15-26 scoreline didn't really do Gloucester justice. We certainly didn't look eleven points worse than the aristocrats of Sudbury that day.

It was, in fact, Rob Andrew's last game for Wasps that day. He was obviously keen to go out on a high note, and it showed. At least one of the Wasps tries was, well let's say, arguable.

Wasps don't look to be as strong a side as they were back in October, thanks to the northerly defections. Let's face it, you can't lose the likes of Andrew, Popplewell and Ryan without feeling it. Which isn't to say that they're not still a highly formidable side.

Conversely, Gloucester look to be stronger than they were then. Whatever happens today, we'll still be on something of a roll, which started way back at the New Year, one or two new players have qualified, and slotted in well. The Richard Hill regime is now firmly into its stride. Just as important, there's a new sense of purpose, of confidence which wasn't apparent five months ago. So anything could happen.

The deciding factor could be the support the lads get, here at Kingsholm. Players will tell you that the sheer volume of noise does raise their game on the big occasion, and that they value it highly. So do get that ticket, and come along and bellow for all you're worth. Dave Sims and everyone else are counting on you.

WELL DONE BOTH !

Can't let the day go by without a word or two about the achievements of a few Gloucester players who have been making the headlines lately.

First of all, we really must congratulate Ian Smith on his performances for Scotland this season. In spite of the quality of the other five back-row men on view, he has been the one to catch the eye in both the games that Scotland have played so far. We always knew that he is an exceptional player, but he is certainly playing the International rugby of his life at the moment.

It comes as something of a surprise to note that the game against France earned Ian his fifteenth Cap. If you recall that the great Mike Burton only won seventeen, then that record represents a major contribution to his adopted National side however you look at it.

Ian always did have his critics here at Kingsholm, but no one ever accused the Scottish Selectors of being idiots, and they have obviously known a good thing when they've seen it all along. Well done, 'Smithy' ! Hope you win many more International honours. But I'll be glad when the Five Nations is over so that we can count on your services for Gloucester in the important matches to come.

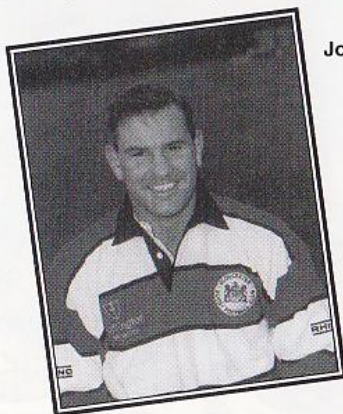
Second, our felicitations to Dave Sims on his selection for the England Squad. It's a pity he didn't make the eventual side, but I suppose that was always on the cards. Assuming that their were to be changes to bolster the mediocre lineout performances so far this season, then it looked as if it would be the taller Archer for Bayfield and Sims for Johnson, and it did seem a bit unlikely that they would risk an entirely new second row against the all-conquering Scots at Murrayfield.

Nevertheless, Dave's time could well be on the horizon, and we wish him well.

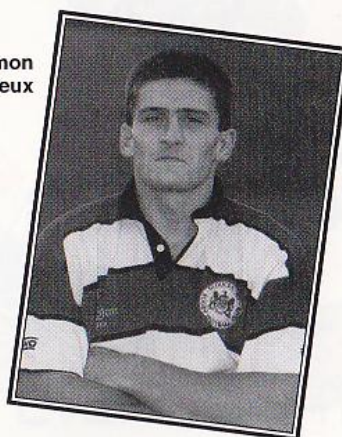
Finally, Phil Greening continues his rise up through the ranks. I'm not inclined to read too much into his omission from the England Squad, and I think it would be a mistake to push him along too quickly in any event.

Pity about the yellow card Phil was handed during an otherwise brilliant performance for England 'A' in Paris, and I hope that the threat of a second one doesn't inhibit him too much in the weeks to come. Did you notice that the aforementioned Ernie Elver in the Pink Un opined that it wasn't entirely a bad thing, because it proved that Phil isn't any sort of shrinking violet ?

I ask you Ernie. Do you really think that needs proving ?



John Hawker



Simon
Devereux

AND THEN THERE WAS ONE...

Regular attenders at these auspicious occasions may recall that we usually have two Match Mascots for the Orrell game. Jessica and Sam Coleman, from Beech Green, Quedgeley, usually do us the honour, one for each side. This time round, however, we're down to one.

The reason is that Orrell have changed their strip since last season, and we weren't able to get our hooks on a suitable example in time for today's game. Young Samantha, who normally represents the visitors, is obviously a fashion-conscious lady, and has decided that she simply couldn't be seen in public wearing a last season's model, so she has regretfully declined.

Not that she isn't here today. She's one of Karen's 'Golden Gamble' girls, and might even have attempted to prise the odd quid out of you already this afternoon. Who knows - she might have sold you the winner. In fact, it's quite a family affair, because Mum and Dad, Julie and Ian, don't miss any games either.

So that leaves 9 year-old Jessica Coleman flying the family flag out in the middle on her own today, a function I'm sure she will perform with her usual aplomb.

For the sake of completeness, I should also tell you that Jessica is an ardent Manchester United fan, with a quite unreasonable affection for someone called Ryan Giggs.

Ah, well ! I expect she'll grow out of it.

TAILPIECE

You don't have to be a world-renowned expert, or a multi-national sports goods manufacturer to introduce exciting and valuable innovations to the game. A friend of mine, who props for Old Cryptians Thirds, and doesn't wish to be identified* has discovered one such innovation.

As you probably know, one vital piece of equipment for the experienced prop forward is the jar of vaseline, or other mysterious unguent wherewith to annoint the ears as a protection against the inevitable abrasion, chafing and laceration which arises in that most esoteric and secretive of the arts and crafts of rugby football.

Having tried many such balsams in his time, my friend has now discovered something new, which, quite apart from being extremely slippery and long-lasting, probably doesn't taste very good either. He recommends udder cream.

In case you're not of the agricultural persuasion, I should explain that udder cream is exactly what it says it is: an application for protecting the mammary appendages of bovine quadrupeds. My information is that it can be obtained in a handy five-litre drum from West Midland Farmers in Westgate Street for a very reasonable outlay.

There is one word of warning, however. Apparently, udder cream is so waterproof that it's hellishly difficult to wash off, afterwards. Why bother, I say. Leave it on 'til next week.

Adds a whole new meaning to the phrase 'a bit of the udder'.

**Probably because he props for Old Cryptians Thirds.*

HOW MARTIN KIRBY SEES IT



Having featured all sorts of words of wisdom on this page, throughout the season, from a variety of highly qualified people, I thought it might be nice to give some space to a complete ignoramus on matters pertaining to our own brand of theology. I therefore present to you, in all his minimal glory, Martin Kirby.

For the benefit of visitors, I should explain that Martin's regular column in the Citizen, and his frequent contributions to BBC Radio Gloucestershire, have become a valued and entertaining feature of the Gloucester scene. It's nice therefore, to enable him to spread his wings into the rarefied pages of Gloucester RFC Programme.

I think.

As many of you will know, Peter Arnold is a man of many parts — some of them in working order!

One of the many strings to his bow is producing this excellent programme, and I have to say it is an honour to be asked to make a contribution, although I must admit that my knowledge of Rugby is slightly less than my grasp of Nuclear Physics. Any ambition I may have nurtured to play for my country was dispelled very early in my time at Hatherley Road Academy for Young Gentlemen. Being short, thin, and not the least bit 'sporty', it was a daunting prospect to be facing a pack of Arnold Schwarzenegger lookalikes hell-bent on my destruction. There was no escape, as most of our teachers hailed from Wales, where Rugby is only exceeded in importance by the twin desires to sing and show the English how inadequate they are compared to the Welsh.

One of the aforementioned teachers, Jack Lloyd, I still see on occasions, and he retains two endearing features. One, he doesn't look a day older than he did in 1965, and two, he remembers how hopeless I was at his beloved sport.

In later years, I continued to avoid any conscious link with the Cherry and Whites, not out of disloyalty, more a lack of motivation, but I could not fail to absorb such legendary names as Burton, Bayliss, and Booth. In the 1990's Rugby is quite literally a whole new ball game. Technology has been introduced into training. Tactics are programmed into CD ROMs, and the game has taken on a professional status, but there is still good old fashioned fun to be had if you know where to look for it.

For instance, names can be a source of amusement. The Walsall side, whose performance on December 23rd was so dire that anyone reading the final score would think they hadn't turned up, gave me cause for concern. I began to think that the 'new man' image had finally infiltrated the changing rooms, and Walsall were fielding two publishers of romantic fiction, but after a second look it became clear their half-backs were Mills and Moon, and not - I am happy to say - MILLS AND BOON!

Here in good old 'Glawster' we have ample proof that you don't need to be playing rugby on an icy pitch to suffer injury. Mike Coley, long associated with a club respected for attracting the roughest, toughest exponents of an extremely physical sport, *he means Harlequins*, managed to break his collar bone - by falling off a moped. You just can't get the staff!

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I have to admit that being Gloucester born and bred it really is my duty to take more interest in the city's finest, and I have made it one of my New Year resolutions to follow GRFC's fortunes more closely. However, my early introduction to the game still inclines me to agree with the gentleman who said - "Rugby is a game played by men with a peculiarly shaped ball." I wish Gloucester RFC and its supporters a very happy and healthy 1996.



Ed Martin ...

**It's the same the whole world over
It's the scrum that gets the blame
It's the backs that get the glory
Ain't it all a bloody shame!**

This is one of the more printable rhymes from the plethora of rugby 'pages' up on the information super highway - otherwise known as the internet. (Web URL's of the sites mentioned are given here in bold type within brackets. If you are trying them, remember to type exactly as seen here.)

Now the internet is the coming thing - the gizmo that is said to be the 'thing' of the Twenty-first Century. And, yes, there are already more than a few rugby pages. The Rugby Football Union has yet to get on the net but there is what appears to be a 'unofficial' RFU home page (<http://www.icl.co.uk/Rugby/index3.html>). However, this contained (last Tuesday evening) details of the 1995 World Cup and a list of the clubs that compete in the 'national' division of the Courage Clubs Championship - the home page bore the small print: 'Last updated: 24th May 1995'.

There are just three division one English rugby clubs that I can find on the net: Leicester has three 'sites'. The official club site (<http://www.le.ac.uk/tigers>) is run by the club's PRO Stuart Farmer. But the best is James Ots' unofficial page that contains match reports for selected fixtures so far this season and a whole lot more (<http://stone.dcs.warwick.ac.uk:8683/tigers/index.html>). The other Leicester site (<http://www.icl.co.uk/Rugby/clubs/leicester3.html>) is purely a who's who. A similar site is devoted to Sale (<http://www.icl.co.uk/Rugby/clubs/sale3.html>).

Bath have an unofficial page with what has to be the ultimate in URL's (<http://www.futurenet.co.uk/DickDastardly,penelope,/People/StuartAnderton.bathfc.html>).

The American pages provide the most fun. The Missoula All-Maggots club (their home page leads off with the rhyme at the start of these cybermusings) is said to be the most 'read' of all the rugby pages. With a name like that, no wonder. It is well worth a visit (<http://dbrml.niaid.nih.gov/maggot/>). And yes, there really is a club with that name - Missoula is in Montana.

Another club that caught the eye was the University of California Santa Barbara RFC. They list their officers, including one Haig Kerkeby who hold the vital position of Drinking Advisor. Now a club that list a Drinking Advisor among its officer begs to be contacted - and the club provides a telephone number. On the end of the line I found Trevor Morgan, the Head Coach.

Ted is a Kiwi and has been at Santa Barbara some five years. He told me that the students took their rugby seriously - as seriously as their drinking/singing. Their clubhouse is a room called The House of Grease (don't ask, says Ted). And by Southern California standards they are rather good. 'We've lost two matches in the past two years,' the coach said. And that is not bad, considering that the University puts in very little resources to the club, while a few hundred miles to the north Stamford University bankrolls its rugby union activities to the tune of \$1 million.

UCSB RFC home page (<http://www.cs.ucsb.edu/~jondoe/rugby/rugby.html>) is mainly an information service for the campus. Oh, yes. They have a Spring international tournament. And international really does mean international - Wasps are set to play.

The Web site that is a sign of the times. It's run in Australia and is called 'Interchange' (<http://iqmedia.com.au/ichange/>) and is designed as an international means of putting players and clubs in contact with each other.

Finally, back to these shores... Cardiff has a good 'unofficial' site (<http://www.ftech.co.uk/~rhys/CRFC/cardif>) run by Rhys Lewis called The Blue and Blacks. And the daddy of 'em all is up in Ian Smith land where the Moray House Rugby Football Club (motto: in vino veritas) has a site that will keep you amused for ages (<http://www.ed.ac.uk/~ebot09/house.html>). Right now their 'home page' is a special Welsh edition (nothing like being topical). This page has a topical 'links to Welsh things' (among many) to 'The Sheep Home Page' - and when you click onto this, you get a message that asks: 'why is this page black?' Nice one, lads.

What about Gloucestershire, you ask? Now there is a link on an American home page 'A dastardly Game' (<http://www.azstarnet.com/%7Erichard.rugby>) that contains perhaps the best listing of rugby clubs in the world that are hooked into the Internet in one way or another. Yes, there with the Baths and Leicesters of this world is Westbury on Severn RFC.