

# GLOUCESTER

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**v SWANSEA**  
**FRIDAY 1ST MARCH, 1996**  
**Kick off - 7.00 p.m.**



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# GLoucester RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

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30  
80  
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13.26  
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23.33

15. Gareth Fenwick *Hart*
14. Mike Peters
13. Alastair Saverimutto
12. Jerry Perrins
11. ~~Tom Beim~~ *Osborne P T R M*
10. Damian Cummins
9. Bruce Fenley *T*
1. Adey Powles
2. Hilton Brown
3. Warwick Bullock
4. Pete Miles
5. Pete Bell *T*
6. Herbert Conradie *T*
7. Neil Spence
8. Colin Gibson

Replacements:  
John Hawker  
Andy Stanley  
Peter Hart  
Laurie Beck

Referee: R. C. Rees  
London Society  
Touch Judges:  
E. Luscott & D. Howard  
Glos. Society

- T* 15. Rhoddy Boobyer
14. Simon Davies
13. Huw Thomas
- T* 12. David Weatherley
11. Gareth Davies
10. Lee Davies
9. Rhodri Jones
1. Ian Buckett
- T* 2. Marcus Thomas
3. Richard Shaw
4. Steve Moore
- T* 5. Steve Thomas
6. Alan Reynolds
7. Dean Thomas
8. Colin Charvis

Replacements:  
T.B.A.

*17 A Williams*

Peter Arnold ...

## FIRST OF THE FEW



It's a sad fact that this evening's welcome visitors represent the first top Welsh side to come to Kingsholm this season. Many of us look back with considerable nostalgia to the days when Gloucester could claim the strongest Anglo-Welsh fixture list on either side of the Bristol Channel, and consider that both the Welsh and English games have suffered from the virtual breakdown of fixtures between the best clubs from both countries. Yes. I know, one or two sides, Bath for example, do play the occasional trans-Severn fixture, but the traditional Anglo-Welsh culture, in rugby terms, has now gone, and more's the pity.

The reasons are obvious, having to do with such things as Leagues and Cups, all very meritorious in their way, no doubt, but the added edge - I won't say 'needle' - which a game against, say, Cardiff, always brought to the Kingsholm season has left us. If you want to know why that's important, then you only have to watch *Rugby Special* to see how, for example, the interpretations of Welsh and English referees have drifted apart, to the detriment of everyone.

Similar things could be said about playing skills. Arguably, the two most inventive outside-halves in English rugby, Paul Turner and Arwel Thomas, are both Welsh. Conversely, there aren't many Welsh packs which would fancy their chances very highly against, let's say, Leicester or even Gloucester.

So it's very good to see Swansea leading the Cwmric assault on Kingsholm this season, even if we have to wait until March to welcome them.

It wasn't supposed to be like that. Pontypool were supposed to be here on Friday February 2nd, but jacked out on the very morning of the match, pleading a paucity of players of appropriate quality. Bridgend should have been our guests last Saturday, but the match fell victim to the Pilkington Cup Quarter Final against Wasps.

Which brings me to another reason why it's so good to see Swansea here this evening. While we were doing the business against Wasps, Swansea were, until last Saturday, the reigning SWALEC Cup holders, until being dethroned by traditional rivals, Cardiff. So both sides appear after memorable knock-out competition battles.

Both sides are going to be a few first-choice players light this evening. Swansea obviously have their own absentees on Welsh duties, while we'll be without Ian Smith, doing his thing for Scotland, and skipper Dave Sims on duty with England 'A' in Italy, together with hooker, Phil Greening. And, of course, both sets of selectors may feel they ought to rest various players in anticipation of the stern League and Cup trials looming on the horizon.

However, this evening, when all's said and done, sees Gloucester v. Swansea, a fixture which has been played regularly since before the turn of the century. It will be a great pity when it proves impossible to retain such matches, but with European competitions threatening to put more strain on an already crowded season, the auguries aren't good.



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Let's not worry about such things just for the moment, however. Let's enjoy the evening, and let elder statesmen like Yours Truly be self-indulgent enough to wallow in a little nostalgia. We'll all have memories of this fixture, my own favourite being the look on a sixteen-stone, six-foot-three Swansea winger's face on being stopped in his considerable tracks by the late Peter Lewis, who stood five-foot-four and weighed about twopence-ha'penny soaking wet.

That was an awfully long time ago, but of such things are great fixture series made. It's nice to see you, Swansea, and we hope you have a thoroughly enjoyable evening. Let's all revel in the occasion.

While we still have the chance.

### REASON - ED COMMENT

Just in case you get the idea that I'm the only bloke who wallows in nostalgia around here, I'll share with you a comment from John Reason's report on last Saturday's Cup game. Talking about the state of the pitch, he opined that:

*'It was made so exactly for the scrum-half's lobbed kick into the box that it would have made the mouth of Mickey Booth water before he became the David Bryant of West Country bowls.'*

I wouldn't want to denigrate Mick's performance on the rinks at all, but I do have to say that I always thought that *David Bryant* was the David Bryant of West Country bowls.

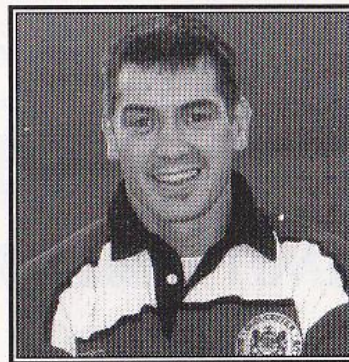
All the important people don't live in London, Mr. Reason.

### SUPPORT FOR SMITHY

Last weekend my eye was directed to a couple of press references to our own Ian Smith's storming performances in the Five Nations Championship this season. As I was saying before I was so rudely interrupted by the Cup match, Ian has never been without his critics at Kingsholm, but most of them have been silenced by his successes this season. My view is nicely supported in various informed quarters.

First of all, Paul Ackford writing in last week's 'Sunday Telegraph', comments on some slightly equivocal aspects of Scotland's play.

*'When Scotland on the offensive, some players act as blockers, providing a shield for the sniping runs of Bryan Redpath and Gregor Townsend. And because they have a two or three yard start, they are invariably electric in their support. Ian Smith, the open-side flanker is the high priest of this particular tactic.'*



Ian Smith

Sacerdotal comparisons apart, I wouldn't blame Ian for that. If the ref. lets you get away with it...

Whether that sort of awareness is one of the reasons, I don't know, but Jim Telfer himself obviously thinks very highly of Ian's contribution, as he reveals in an interview given recently to Alex Spink of the 'Daily Telegraph'. Mr. Spink writes:

*'Look to the reason for Scotland's renaissance, and a number of names spring to mind. Ian Smith's is probably not one of them. But, argues Jim Telfer, Scottish rugby's chief cook and bottle washer, it should be.'*

*When Telfer came to selecting the team for the visit to Cardiff.... Smith was one of the first names pencilled in. "He's also one of the first I turn to when I want an opinion" insisted Telfer. "Ian made it plain some time ago that he didn't want to be considered as Captain, but I greatly respect his views and his experience."*

*All of which begs the question: why has Smith 30, picked up only 16 Caps in five seasons? "Because only now are Scotland playing the type of game where we want to keep the ball alive as much as possible" said Telfer. "David Leslie, John Jeffrey, Findlay Calder and Iain Morrison were all great runners with the ball, but that's not Ian's role," Telfer added. Ian is the first specialist open-side I've had. After a long time in the shadow of others, his time has come. His task is to win the ball in contact: to be the first to the breakdown, to recycle the ball or to turn the opponent in the tackle.'*



*With Ian performing these duties in the way Graham Mourie did for the All Blacks some years ago, and Rob Wainwright' handling the ball more, we have a well-balanced back row. In fact, I'm now looking to develop a dynasty of specialist open-sides in Ian's mould."*

So now we know. Not only was Ian Smith a contender for the Scottish Captaincy, if he'd wanted it, but he's also a role model which all aspiring young Scottish flankers would do well to emulate.

Finally, my eye was caught by a letter in last Saturday's 'Pink 'Un'. It was from Dr. Gerald Morgan, who is a native of Lydbrook, but now lectures at the School of English at the University of Dublin. Now *there's* a combination to be conjured with. Dr Morgan writes:

*'I write to congratulate Gloucester's Ian Smith on the brilliance of his performance against France. The papers here are full of photographs of the scintillating number seven in the white shirt'*

So Ian's qualities are being lauded in Ireland as well as Scotland. British Lions selectors, please take note.

Can't add much more to that. Except, of course, to wish Ian Smith all the best for tomorrow.

### AND, OF COURSE...

...similar good wishes to 'Captain Marvel', Dave Sims, and 'Pit Bull II', Phil Greening, in their Italian expedition with England 'A'. They'll do us proud.

### HOT BATH

Personally, I think it could have been worse. An away match at Bath in the Pilkington Cup Semi Final sounds like a 'mission impossible', on the face of it, but in my view, a trip to Leicester on the same errand would have a tougher proposition.

The Tigers have looked awesome, recently, especially in the pack, while Bath struggled to beat Wakefield, in the Cup, and by no means had it all their own way at Bristol last Saturday, while we were beating Wasps handsomely. And I don't think that anyone would deny that Gloucester are a better team than either of Bath's recent Cup opponents, just at the moment.

Remember also, that we tied the game at The Rec, last season, and perhaps, should have won it. We're a better side now than we were then, and I don't think the Cup Holders can really claim that, as of now.

We're certainly not going to win that game if we travel down expecting to lose, and that's a trap which many of Bath's visitors have fallen into over the years. Gloucester's new-found confidence, stemming from the recent string of wins, could prove decisive. Bath have a long history of *expecting* to win, and don't look quite so convincing when they come up against a side playing with a similar attitude. If Gloucester can keep the roll going, then Bath could well find themselves with a real fight on their hands.

Perhaps it's all another job for our Sports Psychologist, who certainly seems to have done the lads a power of good so far. Remember, Jim Telfer is on record as saying that the Scotland side has no real stars in it, that they are a fifteen-man side, and that's how they beat the star-studded French. Perhaps Gloucester should be taking a similar line. Positive thinking can work wonders.

One thing's for sure - we need the whole of Gloucester down at The Rec, on March 23rd, howling the lads on. The best we can do is to shout out the Bath Faithful, and I'm quite sure we can do that.

At the time of writing, I'm not sure when tickets for the game are due to arrive at Kingsholm, but I can tell you that they will be available to Club Members only, until Saturday, March 9th, after which they will go on sale to the general public. Prices are as follows:

GROUND ADULTS	£8.00
SENIOR AND UNDER 18's	£6.00
EAST STAND AND	
WEST RINGSIDE	£11.00 (No concessions)
TEACHERS AND	
WEST STAND	£12.00 (No concessions)



## COLD BATH

That's all well and good. I do have to tell you, however, that arguably the more important game of our two against Bath to wit, the postponed Courage League fixture at Kingsholm, will not now go ahead next Saturday, March 9th. Apparently, Bath's latest representations to the RFU have borne fruit, from their point of view.

It now looks certain that the game will take place on a Wednesday evening, probably during April. So watch this space.

## THE TROUBLE WITH TIGERS

On a similar subject, we shall obviously not now be able to play our postponed League game at Leicester on March 23rd, because both sides are still involved with the Cup. April 20th had looked a likely date, but it won't do because that is the day in which Leicester feature in the Twickenham extravaganza against an International XV.

So watch this space again. (Sigh !)

## COACHES

Talking about the Cup game, you'll obviously want to know about coaches down to Bath on that day. The ever-efficient Bob Borge has written me a little note about the matter, and I don't think I can do better than quote it in its entirety:

### **CUP SEMI-FINAL AT BATH on March 23rd**

*Can we give the lads even better support than at Nottingham? Can we help them to beat Bath and make Richard Hill's day? Coaches will leave Kingsholm at 11.30 am and the fare will be £4.50. Book, as usual, with Geraldine in the office. Please pay as you book. This makes it much easier for the Steward especially when there is more than one coach.*

*It was great to see the supporters turning out to help the lads. Five coaches went to Nottingham followed by big crowds for Orrell and Wasps with few people supporting our opponents.*

*Richard and the lads are doing their utmost and need our support. We play at Wasps on March 30th and Harlequins on April 13th and then there is Leicester away to be arranged.*

*I know a lot of supporters are not keen on the London fixtures. But the lads need our support. Please remember the dates and try to be there. Further details later. (Bob Borge).*

**continued on page 20**

## THE GLOUCESTER RUGBY CLUB

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## HOW ROB GOUGH SEES IT



Rob Gough is the genial Landlord of the pub across the road. Visitors would probably recognise it as 'The Kingsholm Inn'. but Kingsholm regulars, and indeed, most people who know Gloucester, would call it 'The Jockey', for reasons now lost in the mists of time.

Regular readers may recall that Rob did us the honour of contributing a piece for this page when Wasps visited us - and won - earlier in the season. He was a bit sick about that, so I thought it might be a good idea to invite him to go into print again, following the encounter against the same opposition, when Gloucester won.

He duly obliged. Thanks, Rob. Pithy as usual.

(come to think of it, I don't think I've ever seen him pithed.)

The pre-match atmosphere in the pub was hectic to say the least. Every available glass was in use. Gloucester and Wasps supporters were in perfect harmony and the air of expectancy was great. What a contrast to last October when we played the Wasps in the League. Gloucester's new found confidence kept all the supporters in a very positive mood, feeling a win was very likely. However Wasps supporters were less cocky than they have previously been.

I left the pub shortly after the mass exodus of the supporters to arrive at the ground which was buzzing. The shed was in fine voice and Gloucester's performance was stunning. The air of confidence within the team was noticeable to everyone. Onto the game - the ball retention was excellent. The scrumming was awesome, our pack continually shunted the opposition backwards. Scott Benson was an inspiration at scrum-half and our defence was magnificent.

Another rung up the ladder was achieved on Saturday. The opposition in the last few weeks have failed to score a try against us. It was good to see two players from my former club - Kevin Dunn and Phil Greening totally committed as were all the players, playing hard but fair. We, at the Kingsholm Inn, congratulate Dave Sims who led by example. The post-match atmosphere made me proud to be a Gloucester supporter.

Last October I wrote that we needed 'more clog'. We certainly found that on Saturday. Long may it continue!!

Before I sign off I must mention Andy Stanley. What a wonderful club man, who gives nothing less than 100%. Also, well done to Gareth Fenwick who has taken his chance well.

Survival in the League must be our objective! Good luck to all the players and coaches.



- The photo (left) is a certain excuse for a competition. What is the ref saying to the hooker - or what is the hooker saying to the ref. Send your thoughts to Geraldine Peak in the office. the funniest will receive a pair of tickets to a future game.



*Peter Arnold (cont.)...*

### **BARRY'S THE BOY !**

As these things go, we have a fairly senior Match Mascot, this evening. He's Barry Oakhill and has attained the ripe old age of fourteen.

Barry attends Rednock School, Dursley, is very keen on his cricket, which is highly appropriate for a lad who lives in Stichcombe, home of the venerable 'Stragglers' club. He's also very much into computers.

My information is, however, that his first love is very much his rugby. Barry is a Founder Member and Player of the enthusiastic Dursley Minis set-up, and makes no secret at all of the fact that his ambition is to play for Gloucester and England, in the fullness of time.

Good on you, Barry ! Hope you make it.

### **THANKS TO EVERYONE**

Perhaps the less said, the better, as far as the Simon Devereux affair is concerned, especially with the possibility of an appeal in the air. What I have been asked to do, and am very happy to co-operate with, is to thank all those people who contributed so generously, to the impromptu collection on behalf of Simon's family, organised by our remarkable fanzine, 'Shedhead', which took place outside the ground on Saturday last. 'Shedhead' can often be very funny, but this project shows that it can serve a variety of useful purposes as well, and I wish it well.

Having dunked a couple of bob in a bucket myself, I stood and watched awhile. What impressed me was that many Wasps supporters were supporting the collection, as were passers-by who weren't coming to the game. It seems that public sympathy is widespread.

That thought is born out by the fact that the collection raised well over £400 - a magnificent effort by any standards. Let's hope that the whole affair can be resolved speedily, and decently forgotten.

### **TAILPIECE**

Rob Gough's piece elsewhere in this programme, is very welcome, and obviously reflects the feelings of the select band of ladies and gentlemen who indulge in social intercourse in the 'Jockey', before and after each home match. Rob, however, is fundamentally a gentle soul, and didn't mention one of the crueller barbs, levelled at a group of Wasps camp followers before the commencement of the action, last Saturday. Overheard in the 'Jockey':

"Oh ! Hallo lads. Nice to see you. We've never played Newcastle Seconds before !"

Ouch ! That hurt !

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## Ed Martin ...

All of a sudden, the outlook appears to be a lot better, though there is still a lot to do! In the last 200 minutes of play, Gloucester have not conceded a try. And during that same time, opponents have only managed to score nine points (the three penalties landed by Wasps last weekend).

You are, of course, right. It's the matter of a swallow and summer. But with an undefeated run that is almost into double figures, and two successive upsets (Orrell and Wasps were both heavily fancied by the national media), there is indeed some light at the end of the tunnel.

When it comes to the 10 losses inflicted on Gloucester so far this season, the unfortunate thing is that nine of them have been in "games that matter" (in other words, League games). But the club is, as the American would say, "on a roll". Only one game has been lost since November 14 and that means 10 wins and a draw out of the last 12.

While there is indeed still the threat of this being the most disastrous season ever for Gloucester, the dark clouds hanging over Kingsholm are lightening up a bit as the "self belief" within the team starts showing itself.

With the face of the game, of Rugby Union, in competitive terms, changing these days, it is hard to say which season was the worst on record. Some might well say it was 1982/83, while others might well cite 1955/56.

Both can claim to be the "worst" in club history. In 1955/56, Gloucester

playing record for the 43 games played was 16 wins, 4 draws and 23 losses to give an overall 42 per cent winning record, the worst on record.

On the other hand, 1982/83 with its 54 games played of which 24 were won, 5 drawn and 25 lost (49 per cent winning record) is considered "the pits" as Gloucester failed to qualify for the cup!

Here we are, in the 95/96 season with all sorts of unthinkable thoughts ... and what happens? We are in the Final Four of the Pilkington Cup, which means 80 minutes from Twickenham. Bath might have something to say about that. But we all know about the arrogance that comes from Zummerset, or whatever the county is called these days.

- It appears the savings that our Arnie has been making on his phone bill after switching to United Artists has now been accounted for. The Arnold household is now surfing on the internet, checking out the various rugby pages. He told me that Monmouth RFC had a page. So I checked it out, thinking that Monmouth could join Westbury-on-Severn as two local clubs on the net. Peter is still laughing. While indeed Monmouth RFC does have a home page on the Internet (<http://www.khi.com/rugby/>), the directions to the clubhouse are not "...a few miles past Berry Hill...". The address is 153 Shrewsbury Avenue, Red Bank, New Jersey - "if you pass Sal's Restaurant [sic - the Yanks could never spell] you have gone too far".