



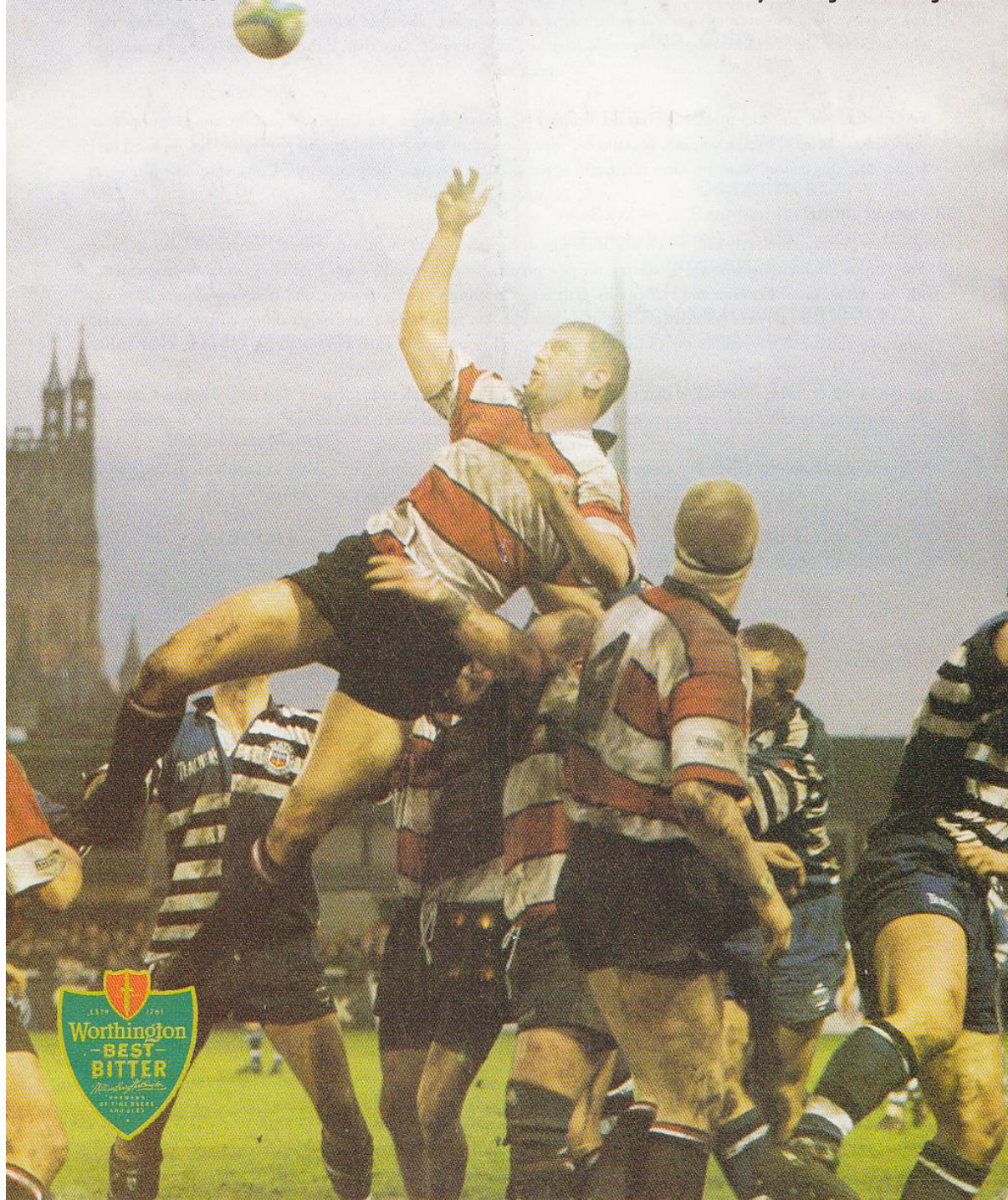
GLOUCESTER F.C.

R. F. U.

G L O U C E S T E R V . P O N T Y P R I D D

£1.00

friday 23rd August 1996 Kingsholm





Kingsholm,
Gloucester

Friday
23 August 1996

Kick Off

7.30 p.m.

Referee

Eric Woodsman
RFU

Touch Judges

John Hackett
RFU

Sam Collins
RFU

GLOUCESTER

Cherry & Red

15	Chris Catling	Full Back	Owen Robins	15
14	Eral Anderson	Right Wing	Geraint Lewis	14
13	Alastair Saverimutto	Centre	Jason Lewis <i>ENOCH</i>	13
12	Martin Roberts	Centre	A. N. Other <i>ROBERTS</i>	12
11	Mike Lloyd	Left Wing	Phil Ford <i>REP</i>	11

10	Mark Mapletoft <i>A. T.</i>	Outside Half	Jason Strange <i>ME</i>	10
9	Scott Benton <i>REP</i>	Scrum Half	Gareth Davis/Matthew de Maid	9

8	Simon Devereux <i>SWALES</i>	No. 8	Dale McIntosh <i>CAP</i>	8
7	Andy Stanley <i>REP</i>	Flanker	Phil Thomas <i>REP</i>	7
6	Pete Glanville	Flanker	Anthony Lloyd/Matthew Lloyd	6
5	Dave Sims <i>CORNWELL</i>	Lock	Paul Owen <i>REP</i>	5
4	Rob Fidler	Lock	Nathan Jones	4
3	Andy Deacon	Prop	Andrew Metcalfe Jones	3
2	Phil Greening	Hooker	A. N. Other <i>WORTHLEY</i>	2
1	Tony Windo	Prop	Neil Synon <i>J. EVANS</i>	1

17	Charlie Mulraine <i>X</i>	Replacements	Paul Taylor <i>(16)</i>	17
18	Alex Morris		Simon Enoch	18
19	Phil Vickery		Gareth Vowles <i>X</i>	19
20	Rob York <i>X</i>		John Evans	20
21			Mark Rowley	21
22			Ian Jones	22

(I) International * Captain Half Time Full Time

FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS

You could say that this evening's game is something of a pipe-opener. The stern business of the season gets under way with an away game at Harlequins, and we could have had an easier start than that, if the Gods, and the computer had been kinder.

Nevertheless, you can keep practising your decibel level by coming along to see United take on the same Metropolitan opposition. At least, I think you can. It could be, what is now called, the 'Development XV' which has replaced the 'Under 21's' this season, who also meet Harlequin opponents. To complete the picture, the Colts, who now play every week, are away to Harlequins.

The reason I'm not absolutely sure which side is playing at Kingsholm has to do with the new Programme set-up. Sports Programme Productions, who are producing the new publication, also handle every First Division Club programme, with the exceptions of Leicester and Harlequins. It's a big commitment, week-by-week, and they now require their copy to be down in Bristol by the Monday evening of each week. This means that I have to get things written and prepared some two-and-a-half days earlier than I used to. So there will be occasions when I'm not so up-to-date as I like to be.

Another result of this is that I know that the Club will be running a coach to Harlequins next Saturday, but I can't tell you, as yet, details like times or prices. So drop into the office, and they'll be glad to give you the full griffin.

Perhaps I should also point out that this evening's programme is also something of a tiny-tots beginner's guide. Future programmes will have a lot more pages, so don't start feeling short-changed yet.

TAILPIECE

I can't resist harking back to last season's Big Night.

When we beat Bath on that memorable occasion, my Beautiful and Talented Wife, along with many others, sat at home in solitary splendour. She didn't know the result of the match.

Then, at around 10.30, the phone rang. It was our son-in London. He'd checked on Teletext, and did know the score.

"Oh !" said my wife. "Did they win ?"

"Yes !" carolled Andrew, joyfully.

"Well, you don't expect your father home yet then do you ?" came the reply, followed by a replacement of the receiver.

All I can say is, that I hope that conversation, or something like it, will take place many times over the next eight months !

STOP PRESS !

Just at the last minute, information about the coach to Harlequins on August 31st, did become available.
As follows: Coach leaves Kingsholm at 11.00am,
Prices: £7.50, £4.00 OAP's and Juniors

Most of us will have had experience of playing rugby when it's - well - urinating down with rain. The first five minutes or so are murder: water runs down your neck, into your eyes, and everywhere else where a crevice presents itself. The ball, should you be unlucky enough to get anywhere near it, feels like a ready-basted frog. To have a lock forward of John Fidler proportions sitting on your face is never a pastime which recommends itself to those of a sensitive disposition, but when he's soaking wet as well, it's infinitely worse.

However, once the process is complete, and you've got yourself well and truly saturated, the whole thing becomes hugely enjoyable. Different, but enjoyable.

From where I stand, it's a bit like that this evening. We're in the process of

more entertaining and more exciting Rugby. The omens on that are good: have you watched any of the Southern Hemisphere Rugby on the telly over the close season? If we can approach something like that flair and commitment, then it won't all have been in vain.

Not everything is different this season of course. Richard Hill is still at the helm. Dave Sims is still in charge on the field. Alan Brinn is still Club Chairman. I can't imagine the Shed changing very much, should the heavens fall. For better or worse (and you must make up your own mind about this one), I'm still here, albeit in unwontedly posh surroundings.

Much has been written and said, over the past couple of years, about the wonderful support which the side

Getting our feet (and everything else) wet

getting ourselves thoroughly soaked by the root-and-branch changes that have overtaken us since last season. We can only hope that, when the whole new regime under which every First Class club must operate has settled itself down, that we shall find ourselves in an era of hugely enjoyable rugby. It's the process of change which is painful. After that's complete.... We shall see.

And we do have some changes to observe. The structure of the Club has altered radically, as it was bound to do. The Laws of the Game have changed in one or two vital areas. There will be unfamiliar faces on the field, perched on top of a new strip. The prices at the gate and on the season tickets have certainly changed. All these things were inevitable, I suppose, and the only justification for them, as far as the average punter like you and I is concerned, is that we are promised

receives from the Kingsholm Faithful, and it was certainly a contributory factor in the run of success with which we finished last season. That won't change either, and if the lads ever needed that support it's during this transitional period. One can only approve and admire Richard Hill's proclaimed policy of going for emerging, young talent. It's bound to bear fruit in the long run, but how the side will fare against other outfits, packed with ageing International stars, itinerant mercenaries and refugees from Rugby League, remains to be seen. Like the man said, nobody said it was going to be easy.

It's going to be about the most fascinating season I can remember. Let's all get in there and give them all the backing our enthusiastic young squad undoubtedly deserves.

WELCOME TO PONTYPRIDD

Since the advent of the Leagues, Welsh sides have been something of an endangered species at Kingsholm, and some of those we have contracted to play have acquired a nasty habit of not turning up. It's with the very greatest of pleasure, therefore, that we can welcome Pontypridd to help us usher in the new era.

We couldn't ask for anyone better. A decade or so ago, Cardiff, for their own good reasons, never completely explained, decided to drop both Gloucester and Pontypridd from their fixture lists. With an exclamation analogous to "Blow this for a game of soldiers!", both clubs decided that the way to resolve the issue was to play each other. To our great good fortune.

When we started our run of fixtures, Pontypridd were an aspiring, enthusiastic club* with a neat, pleasant, fairly new ground at Sardis Road, and the driving force of that terrific genius, Tommy David, propelling them forward. Since then - the rest is history. As results have proved, they are now one of the two best sides in Wales, and an outfit which any team in England should be proud to do battle with.

It's a pity that our respected visitors have three players absent on duty with the Welsh squad which is to try conclusions with the Barbarians tomorrow. We would have liked to see them here, but we wish them very well in one of the first showpiece occasions of the new season.

In fact, we wish Pontypridd all the best in the world for the whole season. No side in Wales deserves success more.

** I had almost written 'young', then I remembered one Mr. Pemberthy, who retired with enormous flair by flinging his boots over Niagara Falls, but still turned out the following season when his club were short of lock forwards.*

One welcome by-product of the new era is that Gloucester RFC appears to be more outward-looking than perhaps we have been at times. The first evidence of this was the arrival of a Club float in this year's Gloucester Carnival. A tremendous reception it got from the crowds along the route, too, as they cheered, waved, flourished cans of lager (it was fiendishly hot that day), and flung miniature rugby balls to the kids lining the roads.

I first came across the float as it arrived at the marshalling point in the Park. I was fairly quick off the mark, but I still couldn't get near Phil Greening for the throngs of scantily-dressed young ladies from other floats who got there before me. It's a tough job, but someone has to do it.

The next foray into the big, wide world comes on September 7th, when the Club Shop has arranged to take a stall at Barton Fayre, to be held in Barton Street itself for the second time this year. The Gloucester City Council estimated that between 30,000 and 40,000 people attended in 1995, so there shouldn't be much trouble in getting rid of the gear Alan Townsend and John Beaman intend to knock out that day, at ridiculously reduced prices.

GETTING INVOLVED

There is one fly in the ointment. September 7th is also the day of the first home Courage League game of the season, so Alan and John may well have their hands full at the Club Shop right here. That means they may be short of someone to man the stall at Barton Fayre. Any volunteers?

Mind you, I don't think it's really a problem. On last year's evidence, they'll probably sell all their gear by lunchtime anyway, have time for a couple in the Fayre's Real Ale bar, and still have time to get back to Kingsholm in time for the pre-match sales boom.

And, talking of Barton Street, I have advance information about a Gloucester Operatic Society production at the New Olympus Theatre, scheduled for November, and by no means irrelevant here. Mark Payne intends to direct four performances of 'Up and Under', an absolutely hilarious musical which has been around for a few years now. Strictly speaking, it's a show based around Rugby League, but the boys at the New Olympus have adapted it for Union. Should make a great night out.

When all the tumult and the shouting had died, and the dust had settled on the Club's new structure, I must have been only one of many Gloucester supporters to be highly delighted that such an old friend, and devoted worker for the Kingsholm cause as David Foyle had inherited the Hot Seat, or more respectfully, the Top Job. In other words, David is now Chairman of the new Board of Directors.

They couldn't have elected a better, or nicer, bloke and we all wish him very well indeed in his new, and onerous, post.

So here are David's pre-season thoughts:

HOW DAVID FOYLE SEES IT

Under those circumstances, I thought it only right that David Foyle be given the opportunity to share words of wisdom with us at the earliest possible moment, and you can't get much earlier than August 23rd.

The season is already upon us and it does not seem more than a few days since the Saracens game. This season marks the start of the professional game, and there is a sharp learning curve for all involved. Unfortunately this has resulted in the season ticket prices being increased substantially. I know from the letters I have received that the Senior Citizens in particular feel hard done by. The board in their wisdom feel that the balance was wrong before and it was better to rectify matters now and the differential can then be kept. The board are very pleased to have signed a five year contract with Richard Hill as we consider him to be one of the best coaches in the country, we are happy to go along with his policy of recruitment particularly as it is one which we can budget for, and build for the future. There are a number of new faces this season, and we wish Richard and his squad the best of luck for the season.

At the Club AGM I mentioned about new toilet facilities for the "Shed" side of the ground, plans are in hand and I would hope in the very near future work

will commence. It is also planned to alter the lounge and players area of the clubhouse, to give better eating facilities for the players and a larger bar area for the supporters. Further announcements will be made later but is thought this work will be carried out in November.

A ticket machine is being purchased by the club and will be installed in mid September which will allow tickets to be purchased for all the club games at Kingsholm in advance. On the matchday front, things have impressed very well, most having been sold for the season, and the match by match games selling well. A major club sponsor has now been found

and it is hoped to be able to make an announcement shortly. The Business sub committee has been reformed under the chairmanship of Jim Jarrett and they will still have a valuable role to play in helping the players.

Since the AGM the board has met with the newly elected General Committee and it is intended to work very closely with them. Alan Brinn and I will also be liaising and Alan will be attending our meetings. Our budget aim for the 96-97 season is around £1.6 million and we are working hard to get there. It is our intention to try and keep Gloucester as a members club, owned by the members, unlike the Baths of this world. However we are all the time looking at alternative ways of raising funds should this be necessary. Lastly all our board wish our supporters an enjoyable and successful rugby season with good rugby and results, and would like to thank you for your support.

WRITING ON A SUNNY AFTERNOON...

Here it is, mid-August, the sun beating down, temperature nudging 30 degrees, England selectors just announced that they are dropping the world's best wicket keeper for the Third Test, the Coca-Cola Kodak Visa Sports Illustrated-Time IBM Bausch & Lomb Panasonic Xerox John Hancock UPS Olympic Games just over, Gloucestershire beats Yorkshire before half time...

Has the world gone crazy? Rugby in August, I ask you. There was a time when the cricket season was allowed to finish and for summer to turn to autumn before a rugby ball was kicked in anger. In more recent years, seasons have been getting underway on the first Saturday in September.

Never before has Gloucester played a fixture in August at Kingsholm. We're told that its all because of the misnamed Twickenham edict, the 'structured season'. And the Friday evening kick-off is apparently because of a

WRU edict to its clubs.

So here we are this August evening for one of the very few friendlies of this season's fixture card. Now the word 'friendly' in the context of any contact sport match-up is something of a misnomer; and having got that out the way, this evening's affair is not exactly a game that matters to either side when it comes to the respective cup or league races.

Of all the Welsh clubs that feature in Gloucester's records, Pontypridd is the one that is the 'odd one out'. You see, the Cherry and Whites actually have a winning record against Pontypridd.

It is not exactly one of the traditional fixtures, like Newport, Cardiff, Llanelli or

Swansea - all four clubs having dominated (to put it mildly) Gloucester over the past 100 years or so.

Out of the 15 matches played, Gloucester have won 11 and Pontypridd 4. The record is even better when it comes to the clashes at Kingsholm - there have been nine of them, with Gloucester winning all but one, the fixture played on October 6, 1979 when Pontypridd won 22-14.

The first meeting between the two clubs was at Kingsholm in the autumn of 1901, Gloucester winning by a margin of 14-8. The following season, again at Kingsholm, Pontypridd were dispatched 14-0. Fixtures were then discontinued until 1979.

During the 1980s, there were fixtures each season, home advantage alternating each year. But the demands of league fixtures on both sides of the border finally caught up with the series and the last clash between the two clubs was at Kingsholm on January 31, 1992 when Gloucester won 26-10.

ED MARTIN

The Record - Gloucester vs Pontypridd

	Total	Kingsholm	Away
Gloucester Wins	11	8	3
Pontypridd Wins	4	1	3
Drawn	0	0	0
Gloucester Pts	308	202	106
Pontypridd Pts	196	93	103
Gloucester Winning %	77.33	88.89	50.00

GLOUCESTER RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB – FIRST XV FIXTURES 1996/97

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