

FIRST DIVISION

RUGBY

P R O M A G



FOUNDED 1873

Vol 1/5
£2.00

WAITING FOR THE WHITE SMOKE

Alastair Hignell on Carling's
successor

WHO'S GAME IS IT ANY WAY

Robert Armstrong on
television's coverage
of Rugby

THE EUROPEAN CUP

An introduction by Peter Jackson

Heineken®



Westbury

GLOUCESTER
v
EBBW VALE

at Kingsholm
Saturday 12th October 1996
Kick off 3.00 pm



FOUNDED 1873

Saturday 12th October 1996 Kick-off 3.00pm

GLOUCESTER 59
Cherry & White**EBBW VALE** 7

15	Chris Catling	T	Full Back	Darran Wogan	16
14	Audley Lumsden	T	Right Wing	Gareth Bishop/Shane McIntosh	15
13	Alastair Saverimutto	T	Centre	Lyndon Lewis/Neil Morgan	14
12	Andy Metcalfe		Centre	Ian Jeffreys/Alun Harries	12
11	Mike Lloyd	T	Left Wing	Sean Marshall/Cain Price	11

34pts	10	Mark Mapletoft	TC 4T	Outside Half	Mike Boys/Gareth Williams	10
	9	Scott Benton		Scrum Half	Byron Hayward/Dai Llewellyn	9

1	Tony Windo		Prop	Dean Jones/Mike Willson	1
2	Phil Greening		Hooker	Malcolm Sibthorpe/Steve Jones	2
3	Phil Vickery		Prop	Mike Boycott/Dorian Medlicott	3
4	Rob Fidler		Lock	Chay Billen/Craig Bonnell	4
5	Dave Sims *		Lock	Kingsley Jones/Ben Watkins	5
6	Rob York		Flanker	Paul Pook/Lee Banks	6
7	Andy Stanley		Flanker	Allin Phillips/Damian Caswell	7
8	Simon Devereux	T	No.8	Mark Jones/Duncan Bell	8

16	Adey Powles		Replacements	M Wood	16
17	Ed Pearce			P Sampson	17
18	Martyn Kimber			D Macer	18
19	Laurie Beck			P Scrivener	19
20					
21					

Referee
J. M. Fleming (SRU)(I) International
* CaptainTouch Judges
I Ramage (SRU)
D Hunter (SRU)

Comment ça va, boyos!

Peter Arnold

When the proposal to run a European competition burst upon a bemused world, the news was greeted by most people with a sort of 'I'll believe it when I see it' attitude. We were still reeling from the shocks delivered by an indecently rushed decision to professionalise everything in sight, the First and Second Division Clubs were muttering darkly about banning themselves from the hallowed halls of Twickers, and even flank forwards could be seen glowering in gloomy corners, crushed by the removal of their God-given right to ignore the scrum, and rush around clobbering everything that moved between them and the dead ball line.

Dammit! We didn't know at that point who was going to play for which team, let alone who they were going to be performing against.

Against that background, the Euro Cup proposals were received in a blaze of relative indifference. Then, as the idea became firmer, we started to take the whole thing seriously. Questions were raised. Opinions were delivered.

Could we expect to see allegro Italians, with stiletto-sharp backs and forwards of operatic tenor proportions, wreaking mayhem at Kingsholm? Would sangria-fired Spaniards scorch the sacred turf, enlivening proceedings with cries of "Ole!" and "Venga Toro!"

More to the point, would we have to change our drinking habits? Would the bars be restocked with suspicious foreign liquors, provided for the hordes of cross-Channel tourists confidently expected to safari down Worcester Street? It seemed doubtful whether absinthe really would

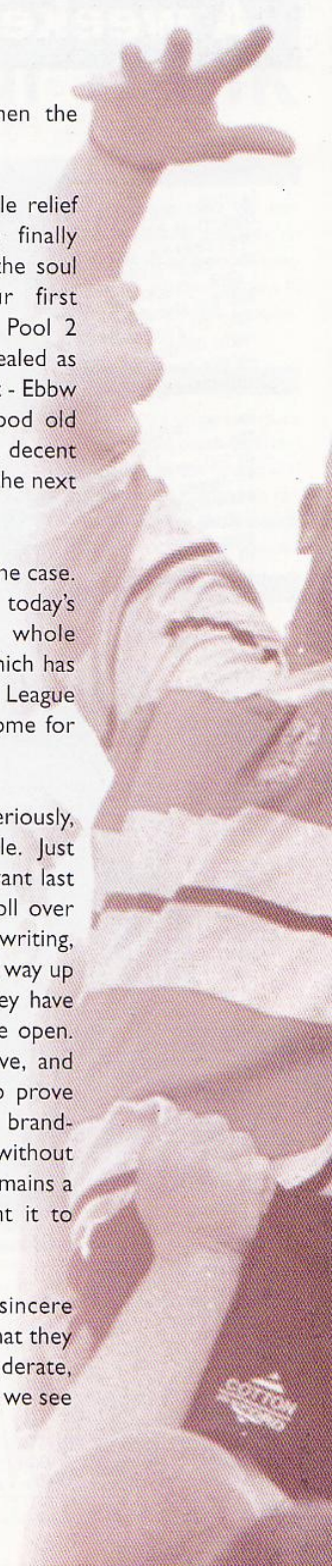
make the heart grow fonder when the French arrived.

It therefore came as a considerable relief when the actual fixtures were finally finalised. And a positive balm to the soul when we discovered that our first opponents in the European Cup Pool 2 (don't ask!) competition were revealed as coming all the way from - wait for it - Ebbw Vale. Sighs of relief all round. 'Good old Ebbw!' we said. 'They appreciate a decent pint of warm, flat beer as much as the next man!'

Past experience proves that to be the case. Quite apart from anything else, today's respected visitors represent a whole tradition of cross-Severn games which has been sadly eroded by the advent of League rugby, and they're extremely welcome for that reason alone.

They are also a team to be taken seriously, opposition by no means negligible. Just because we put 64 points on Dunvant last week, we can't expect Ebbw to roll over and subside meekly. At the time of writing, they are sitting in a little group, half way up the Heineken First Division, so they have all to play for. Their season is wide open. They have a point or two to prove, and what better occasion on which to prove them than the first Saturday of a brand-new European competition? Even without TV coverage, the European Cup remains a great idea, and everyone will want it to work.

So it's good to offer a very sincere welcome to Ebbw Vale. We hope that they enjoy themselves something immoderate, and that it won't be too long before we see them again.



Bah ! Humbug !

Peter Arnold

Don't know about you, but I find it intensely depressing to wander through town, in shirt-sleeve order, enjoying the autumn sunshine, only to find shops festooned with Christmas decorations, and proudly displaying twee little racks of Yuletide cards. Don't get me wrong, I'm no Scrooge, being one of those people who works at keeping the Festive Season traditional, and endures the hangover afterwards, but I think elongating the whole thing too much simply dilutes everyone's enjoyment.

Having said all that, it may seem a little crass of me to point out to you that the Club Shop, shortly to move into more spacious and convenient premises, I'm told, has a wide range of goodies which make admirable Christmas gifts for right-minded relatives, friends, mistresses or whatever. I'm inspired to do so for one reason only.

Look at your fixture list, and you'll find that we don't have any First XV home games on Saturdays in November.

So when we've said 'Au revoir' to Bourgoin on the 26th of this month, we shan't all be here again until the Christmas shopping spree is well under way.

It could well behove you, therefore, to give the matter your serious consideration. Alan Townsend and John Beaman will be delighted to open the wonders of their Santa's Grotto to you.

KEEPING THEIR PLACES

Congratulations to Dave Sims and Phil Greening on keeping their spots in Jack Rowell's Bisham Abbey training squad. Did you notice that he has added two props, Messrs Green and Volland, to the party, specifically to 'provide genuine scrummaging practice'?

Wassamatter? Phil getting a bit tough for 'em?

CATCHING 'EM YOUNG

We seem to be in a run of glitches in our series of Match Mascots at the moment. At the time of writing, our scheduled young flag-bearer has had to drop out, and Geraldine wasn't able to organise a replacement before going to press. If her efforts have borne fruit, then I'll give you details as soon as I can.

The situation does, however, give me an opportunity to tell you about what happened at the Wasps game, when the young lady who was originally down to do the job also had to drop out at very short notice.

As we have found in the past, when in doubt, turn to the Wooley family. To her father's surprise, Viv's charming little four year-old daughter, Charlie, agreed to act as a stand in. Then, standing on the touchline, just as the teams were due to run on to the park, she exercised her feminine prerogative, and changed her mind.

Enter resourceful Gloucester Captain, Dave Sims. He swept her off her feet, and ran out onto the field with Charlie tucked under his arm. After the proceedings, Viv came on and rescued her, and all was joy and jollity. I can think of some rather bigger young ladies who wouldn't mind being carried off by Dave Sims.

TAILPIECE

I was interested to see the proposal to install a ticket machine in the Clubhouse. The idea is that you will be able to purchase a ticket for next week's game before leaving the bar this week. Excellent idea, I thought, but then I was reminded of a similar facility in the Gents at the 'Bell and Gavel', down by the Cattle Market. For years, the condom machine there, in common with most, bore the statutory kite mark, and the legend 'PRODUCTS MANUFACTURED IN ACCORDANCE WITH BS No. WXYZ', or whatever.

Underneath, in bold, blue chinagraph, someone had written: "So was the Titanic".



Thrashings galore showed the difference between the haves and have nots in Courage League rugby

But one result shone out like a beacon to give hope to those sides that do not have the financial clout to buy-up the best stars in the world.

Gloucester's superb 28-23 victory over previously unbeaten Wasps brought the house down at Kingsholm. Wasps, brimming with stars like Lawrence Dallaglio, Damian Cronin, Andy Gomersall and Gareth Rees, were shocked by a side which was full of youngsters.

The Cherry and Whites, without a point this season, hassled and harried the Wasps out of their rhythm to breaking point and recorded their first

London Irish.

These are teams that, on the face of last Sunday's performance, they should beat. That would give Gloucester eight points and put them in with a very good chance of clinching a mid-table position away from the relegation zone.

From certainties for the drop, the west country men now have a golden chance to race back into safety contention, and plunge another club into the mire.

A mood of despondency for the likes of Rugby, beaten 156-5 by Newcastle, Nottingham, 102-22 losers at Coventry, plus the 89-18 Orrell result and the 87-15 away win for Richmond at Moseley descended on the Courage League after Saturday's matches.

The 'haves' have and could easily form a Super League next season while the 'have nots' struggle to keep their heads up after crushing defeats.

FIRST DIVISION
RUGBY
P R O M A G

comment

league win of the season.

Considering that Gloucester had been slaughtered on the opening day by Harlequins, who did the same to hapless Orrell last Saturday, plus other losses to Leicester and Bath, this was a phenomenal result.

Their director of rugby Richard Hill has come in for some stick recently outside the city because of his policy of not getting the chequebook out and buying up a big name.

Inside the city and the club, however, the atmosphere has been quite different. The Shed fans, not averse to giving their views in no uncertain terms if they think it deserves it, have remained quiet and loyal to Hill and his strategy.

And, even though results have been going against Gloucester, the players have been in optimistic mood.

Hill's team now have four European Conference matches before they get back down to league action at Orrell, West Hartlepool and then home to

Gloucester's win was only one result. They are still in the thick of the relegation tussle in Courage League One.

But at least it gives those teams which were on the end of such huge hammerings on Saturday a glimmer of hope that they can follow in the Cherry and Whites' footsteps. Big clubs are not unbeatable.

And Hill – this victory will not do any harm to his chances of becoming a future national coach – should not be surprised if he receives a lot of telephone calls and requests for meetings from other sides to ask the question: "How did you do that?"

With all respect to Nigel Melville and Wasps, it certainly did show the way forward for the teams outside the rich elite on a weekend which could so easily have been a watershed between the big names and the rest.

HOW ED MAR

My old friend Ed Martin tells lies. Not in his regular, fascinating page, but my original request for him to write this page this week wasn't in the least like the scurrilous description he starts his piece with. Here's what really happened.

'Ed !' I quavered, nervously. 'What is it, Arnold?' he queried with all the lofty disdain of a Real Journalist'

'Look Ed', I continued, 'You've always been confined to writing about things historical. How would you like a chance to tell us what you think about the present situation?'

His demeanour changed then. In fact he practically bit my arm off. So here's his, quite characteristic, article.

Oh ! Ed Martin is the only person on God's Green Earth who ever calls me 'Arnie.' I think it's the physical resemblance to the other one that does it. Mr. Schwarzenegger of that ilk.

The Bard of Barton got in touch a couple of days ago. "Ed, you've drawn the short straw," Arnie said.

"Wat-der-ya-mean," I replied. "Wanna write the As I See It piece," he said - and there was this sorta funny tone to the voice.

"OK, I'll do it, gotta go". Well, I had to get back to the important thing of the hour - anyway Arnie is a cricket freak and he just would not understand. You see, the O's had taken the lead at the top of the twelfth and the Indians were batting. Could the O's win it and get into the showdown for the pennant for the first time in a million years?

"OK, that's great. I'll want the piece by Sunday evening," he said.

"Geez, Arnie Roberto's just put the O's ahead ..."

So, here it is. Sunday evening. The Wasps have lost their unbeaten record. YIPPEE!

There's a Famous Grouse that is insisting on flying around inside my head. And Arnie is wondering how I see it.

Well, two things come immediately to mind. About four minutes into the second half, Gary Linneker was heard to utter to the nation on Radio Five Live: "It looks as though there's an upset in the offing at Kingsholm." Then there is the remark by the Daily Mirror man, Colin Price, in the bar some three hours after the final whistle: "There's something about a Gloucester win at Kingsholm - everyone swaggers around the bar afterwards." Colin should know as he wrote both news and sports for the old Brockworth and Churchdown News before moving to Southend, the Western Daily Press (Sports Editor), the Daily Star and now the Mirror. As for the Wasps game. Alas, I rarely see the big games - last weekend for the second successive home league match, the press box was not big enough! But I did hear something about referees. Cue a favourite piece of poetry...

*Mother, may I slug the ref,
May I slug him right away?
So he cannot be here, mother,
When the clubs begin to play?
Let me clasp his throat, dear mother,
In a dear delightful grip,
With one hand and with the other
Bat him several in the lip.
Let me climb his frame, dear mother,
While the happy people shout,
I'll not kill him, dearest mother,
I will only knock him out.*

For the record, the ode was penned some hundred and ten years ago and no one really knows just who wrote it. It was brought to my attention several years ago by Kevin Nelson, a sports writer from San Francisco, who has never graced the press box at Kingsholm.

While "Shedhead" has a love/hate relationship with the Press, it has to be admitted that in recent years, the national

MARTIN SEES IT

Press has been somewhat kinder to Glawster of late. A couple of years ago, the club was being championed as the last bastion of the amateur game at the top level. Memories are, of course, short. Anyway, why should anyone from Kingsholm remind them of the "fivers in the boots" saga?

This season, the scribes from the toyshops of what used to be called Fleet Street have a new line. "Well, Gloucester is still essentially a team of local players - no imports at Kingsholm," is how one writer put it. And the general feeling is that they really want Gloucester to stay in Division One next season just to prove that a club can survive without importing from "south of Dover" and having big multi-national sponsors who think the London is England. Of course they won't admit it, but they do like Di Long's sarnies before the match and the Kingsholm atmosphere during the match, but don't tell anyone.

We are used to worrying for most of the season and then having a couple of good results in April. Is it two or three seasons ago when the "R" word started to be bandied around? The unthinkable has not materialised. And the way that Richard Hill's "young team" is improving with every match...

(How are we doing, Arnie? 676 words already? Not much space left?)

Well, I was going to let you into a few press box secrets, but space is running out. So you will never know just which writer takes longer to write his match report than the players take to play it (the match, that is), or the reporter from an august journal in London who arrived at Kingsholm and handed over a ticket for an international at Twickenham by mistake, or the identity of the scribe of St. John's Lane who ...

Hi, Katie, nice piece in the programme last week. Oh, yes. I hope the O's stuff the damn Yankees. You've gotta have heart!

It is not as bad as all that. A good win against the Wasps, and unbeaten in the Anglo-Welsh competition. Now, onward into the brave new world of what is called EURO2. Oh yes, there is the little matter of how, so far this season, Welsh clubs are finding it difficult - nay impossible - to beat Gloucester. The season is young, but it is Gloucester 3, Welsh Clubs 0.

Ebbw Vale are no strangers to Kingsholm - a ground that is not kind to them. The two clubs met on a regular basis throughout the Sixties, Seventies and Eighties after an initial meeting at Kingsholm in the spring of 1955 which ended in a 3-3 draw.

There have been a total of 17 meetings between the two clubs at Kingsholm, with Gloucester winning 14 of them and Ebbw Vale posting just two wins. Mind you, when Gloucester travel to Ebbw Vale, the record for the Cherry and Whites is seven win from 17 visits.

Somehow fixture secretaries managed to squeeze in the fixture in between the Cup and League fixture commitments of the two clubs. But it was after the match on September 29, 1990 that the two sides called it a day.

ONE MOMENT IN TIME

Continuing the Welsh 'theme' we consider today the match played at Kingsholm on Saturday March 4, 1922. Gloucester had lost five successive matches - Guy's hospital, Cardiff Swansea Newport and Cheltenham. Could the fortunes be turned around when London Welsh visited, with Dix and Millington missing from the team and Gough being given a trial at scrum half?

London Welsh were dispatched 31 points to 5, with Gloucester scoring seven tries. Bill Bailey's remarks on the game from that evening's "Football Final" edition of the Citizen:

"Gloucester's substantial win was extremely gratifying after a bad run of

ED MARTIN

defeats, and it is hoped that this is a prelude to better things. London Welsh were not outplayed to the extent the score would suggest, and several times they gave the City anxious moments. This was especially the case in the first half, when the City backs were by no means safe in handling, and numerous promising movements broke down through want of a safe pair of hands.

In the second portion Gloucester had the game well in hand, and there were numerous bright patches which pleased the crowd.

"Gloucester for the most part had the putt forward, though the visitors were a lively lot in the open, Michael especially doing excellent work, and his colleagues following up and tackling keenly. The most promising forward on the Gloucester side today was Harris, whose brilliant footwork was a great feature. He was splendidly supported by Roderick, Voyce, Holford and Ayliffe, all of whom distinguished themselves.

"At half back, Gough and Hall did fairly well considering it was their first time together. Gough did one of two smart things, and with coaching and experience he should improve considerably. He has not yet attained that happy knack of accurately directing his passes, and he is inclined to fight the ball too much, but these are deficiencies he ought to be able to eradicate with practice. But a great deal depends on his own efforts as to whether he will go further. If he is keen on promotion there is no reason why he should not have a good trial. Hall, in the emergency, filled the role of outside half with his accustomed whole heartedness, and did very serviceable work both in attack and defence.

"The inclusion of Stanley Budd made for a great improvement in the City three-quarters. The Bristolian played stylish football, and showed keen perception for an opening. Hughes was good in parts, but both the wing men missed passes when there was every chance of scoring. All-

round, however, there were signs of a better understanding, and there was more punch in the attacks than seen of late. With Dix and Millington to assist, and the forwards at their best, Bristol will find Gloucester a difficult obstacle to surmount at Kingsholm next week."

The Citizen billed the visit of Bristol on March 11, 1922 as 'The Match of the Season'. Did Bristol find Gloucester "a difficult obstacle to surmount?" If the scoreline is anything to go by, the answer is no - Gloucester 3, Bristol 23.

Finally, a look at the North Gloucester Rugby Combination Division One report and league table for Saturday March 4, 1922: "West End lost their first match of the season to St. Mark's, who, after a good keen game, won by 9 points to 3. On the day's play, the Saints were easily the better team and their success makes the competition very interesting."

	P	W	L	D	Pts
St. Marks	9	8	1	0	15
West End	9	8	1	0	15
* Tredworth	8	6	2	0	14
Gordon League	9	4	5	0	8
Painswick	8	3	5	0	8
Oil Mills	8	0	8	0	0
Dursley	7	0	7	0	0

*St. Mark's conceded two points to Tredworth for broken fixture.

