

FIRST DIVISION

RUGBY

P R O M A G



FOUNDED 1873

Vol 1/6

£1.00



Westbury

**GLOUCESTER
v
BEGLES BORDEAUX**

at Kingsholm
Wednesday 16th October 1996
Kick off 7.30 pm



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Wednesday 16th October 1996 Kick-off 7.30pm**GLOUCESTER**

Cherry & White 10

BEGLES BORDEAUX

17

15	Audley Lumsden	Full Back	Lucas Vallon	16
14	Eral Anderson	Right Wing	Robbie Mac Donald	15
13	Don Caskie	Centre	Luc Lafforgue/Sebastian Loubens	14
12	Andy Metcalfe	Centre	Michael Carre/Thomas Ossard	12
11	Mike Peters	Left Wing	Alexandre Bouyssie	11

10	Mark Mapletoft	Outside Half	Vincent Etcheto	10
9	Scott Benton	Scrum Half	Guy Accoceberry/Gill Doyamboure	9

1	Tony Windo	Prop	Patrick Colloazo	1
2	Phil Greening	Hooker	Laurence Dehez	2
3	Phil Vickery	Prop	Olivier Sourgens/Frederic Garcia	3
4	Dave Sims *	Lock	Christopher Mougeot	4
5	Mark Cornwell	Lock	Andre Berthozat	5
6	Ed Pearce	Flanker	Sebastian Conchy	6
7	Nathan Carter	Flanker	Maurice Barragure/Christophe Jean-Pierre	7
8	Simon Devereux	No.8	Yan Lemeur	8

16	Paul Holford	Replacements		16
17	Laurie Beck			17
18	Alex Morris			18
19	Rob Fidler			19
20	John Hawker			
21	Adey Powles			

Referee

A. Lewis (Irish RFU)

(I) International
* Captain

Touch Judges

P. Swayne (Irish RFU)
M. Whyte (Irish RFU)
4th Official S. Collins

GETTING THERE

Peter Arnold

One chap who is embroiled in all this fun and jollity more than somewhat is Bob Barge. He has to know where everything is being played, otherwise the club coaches would be trotting off along the wrong motorways.

I don't know if there is a seat or two left on the trip to Swansea on Saturday (£7.00, leave Kingsholm 11.00 am.) but it could be worth asking if you're interested.

The next episode in the Barge Bonanza is scheduled for that Courage League visit to Orrell on Wednesday, October 30th. The fact that it is a midweek evening game - which is unfortunate - does complicate matters, because in order to minimise various traffic delays there will have to be an early start, probably at around 3.00 or 3.30pm. And, be advised, it looks unlikely that the coach will get back to Kingholm before midnight.

I know this is still a fortnight away, but Bob really does have to have some idea of likely numbers before he can make any decisions about the matter. So if you fancy the trip to one of the more pleasant and welcoming of the grounds we visit in the Courage League, do let the people in the office know as soon as you can.

By way of contrast, Bob Barge is relatively certain that he will be running a coach to London Irish for the Euro game on November 2nd. Highly recommended, that trip. It's one of the few grounds I know where one can watch the whole match without ever leaving the bar, and as they claim, with some justice, to dispense some of the best Guinness in London, it's an option you might like to consider.

More details when I have them.

Finally, Andy Mitchell tells me that he already has over thirty takers for his eagerly-anticipated overnight safari to West Hartlepool. I think this is the third year he's run it, and the stories about various deeds and misdemeanours on that trip proliferate to legendary proportions.

If you've only just caught up with it, the idea is to leave fairly early on the Saturday, stop on the way to refresh the inner man and lady, watch the game, partake in the joys of the West Hartlepool clubhouse for a while, and then retire to the already-booked hotel until you feel like retiring to your virtuous couch.

Or not. Charlie Hannaford always had an eleventh commandment: "Thou shalt not sleep on tour!". I don't know if it applies here, but it wouldn't surprise me.

Afterwards, it's a gentle saunter home on Sunday, a good time having been had by all. I'm not certain of the price: the last thing Andy Mitchell vouchsafed on the matter was 'probably about £55', which is good value. I should warn you that Andy has a very loyal group of regulars for that trip, and obviously, he intends to give them priority this year. So if you would like to go, but haven't before, better talk nicely to Andy Mitchell. I'm told he may well be susceptible to bribery of the liquid variety.

Deux's Company

Peter Arnold

It's a bit like Stagecoach, really. We don't see a French team for ages, and then, all of a sudden, two come along at once.

Bit odd that. Over the past several seasons, sides from all over the world have run out at Kingsholm. We've seen New Zealanders - including the All Blacks themselves - Australians, South Africans, Americans, rugby players from just about everywhere the oval ball game has become part of the sporting scene, but to my knowledge, we haven't in recent years had an opportunity to welcome a team from our most illustrious of rugby-playing neighbours, La Belle France, itself. Which is as fine a justification for pressing on with the troubled European Cup Competition as I, for one, can think of.

In ten days time, we can expect a neighbourly call from the Bourgoin side, about which more at the appropriate moment. Tonight we are delighted to see the lads from Begles Bordeaux.

We can't claim to know very much about Bordeaux in rugby terms. When we think of that historic old southern city, then our thoughts are more likely to turn to the wines of the Bordeaux region, that staple diet, known the world over simply as 'Claret', which landed gentry of a couple of centuries ago used to consume at the rate of three bottles a day.

As well they might. Some of the greatest wines the world has ever seen hail from that sun-drenched area. They may be a bit beyond the price range of y'r average Shedhead, but all of us will have supped a Claret in our time, and remarked on its smoothness, its full-bodied nature, its just plain quality.

I suspect that, by nine o'clock this evening, we'll be talking about Bordeaux rugby in

similar terms. Traditional Gallic flair is taken for granted, but we'll probably see some very smooth running, some quality rugby, and as for full-bodied - ask the forwards afterwards.

At the time of writing I don't know how our opening engagement in the European competition went, but, with no disrespect, whatever it says on the fixture list, it's hard to think of Ebbw Vale in terms of an international affair. We need the arrival of a side such as Begles Bordeaux to put the thing in its proper perspective. For that reason alone, we offer a very hearty welcome to our Gallic visitors, we hope they enjoy the Kingsholm scene: the rugby, the ground, the crowd, and above all, the hospitality.

Bienvenu, Begles Bordeaux !

CATCHING 'EM YOUNG

"Bit of a cock-up on the Match Mascot front", as they'd say in 'Reginald Perrin'.

At the time of writing I'm not sure if we have a Mascot for this evening. Always a bit difficult mid-week during term time. However, I can tell you that we did have a lad for last Saturday's Ebbw Vale game. I wasn't able to tell you about him on the day for deadline reasons ("Tricky chaps, deadlines!")

He was Craig Balmer, ten years old, and the youngest of the three sons of our highly efficient groundsman, Dave Balmer. Young Craig also enjoys cricket and football, and attends St. Kenelm's School, Oxford. Thanks Craig, for dropping in at short notice !

Let's sort things out

Peter Arnold

Life is a bit complicated at the moment. Time was, when all we had to remember was that, sometime about this time of the season, we'd have to start thinking about Cup matches. All the rest of the campaign was taken up by what were quaintly called 'friendlies'. Of course, we did have a more than passing interest in County Championship matters, but they weren't allowed to get in the way of the Gloucester RFC fixture list. Indeed, some of us can recall Gloucester beating Harlequins at the Stoop with ten reserves in the side because of County calls. Unfortunately, the late, unlamented Divisional Championship put the kybosh on all that.

Then the Leagues came along, but even then things weren't all that different from the traditional fixture format, if you discount the loss of so many of our Welsh games.

Today, life isn't so simple. For your delectation and delight, we present to you not one, not two, not even three, but four distinct and different competitions in which the club is involved. What's more, we have to play against two clubs in two different competitions each. We meet Ebbw Vale in both the Anglo-Welsh Conference and the European Cup, and London Irish in European Cup and Courage League. And we don't know about the Pilkington Cup draw yet!

So, to clear my own mind as much as anything else, here is the situation As I See It.

The European Cup takes centre stage for the next couple of weeks. After this evening's match, we visit Swansea on Saturday. Then it's back home on Saturday October 26th for the visit of Bourgoin. On November 2nd we're off to London Irish, and if we get that far, the European Cup Semi Final is scheduled for Saturday, November 16th.

Rather sneakily, I thought, a bit of overlap has crept in here, because we have the vital, and difficult, trip to Orrell in the Courage League on Wednesday, October 30th, A Thursday run to Ebbw Vale in the Anglo-Welsh Conference on November 7th looks uncomfortably close to that other vital Courage trip

north to West Hartlepool on November 9th.

Dunno about that one. I think, were I in a position of influence, I'd try and find an alternative date for the Ebbw Vale trip.

After that, Courage League affairs take precedence right up to Christmas, although we do have one or two friendlies tucked away there somewhere. Immediately before that, our first interest in the Pilkington Cup - Round 5, that is - is slated for Saturday, December 22nd.

Clear as mud, isn't it? Perhaps it's appropriate that All Saints Church is likely to be taken over by a Confucianist organisation, who would probably advise us simply to lay back and enjoy it. To use that hoary old cliché - take one match at a time.

NICE ONE 'TOFTY'!

Confirmation, if anyone this side of Brisbane needs it, of Mark Mapletoft's successful conversion from full-back to outside-half, has come from no less a personage than Jack Rowell. Quietly, and without much fanfare, 'Tofty' was drafted into the latest England Squad training session, where he joined Dave Sims and Phil Greening.

The fact that Lord Jack was at the Wasps game obviously didn't do any harm at all. After all, Mr. Rowell was able to make a direct comparison with Alex King, who didn't actually have a stormer on the day.

Congratulations Mark ! If anyone ever fought back from absolutely horrendous injury, you have, and you deserve all the recognition you get.

Correct me if I'm wrong, but I think this is the first time any Gloucester player has got anywhere near an England outside-half spot since Chris Williams, and that's going back a bit, now.

Ed Martin

Entente Cordial?

Picture the scene at Kingsholm. It's deep into injury time, Gloucester trail by six points. Suddenly the opponents crack and a forward wearing a Cherry and White jersey is seen plunging over the line for the touchdown. Of all the kickers in the illustrious history of this club, there is one who most people would put money on to land the conversion to win the game.

There was a hush around Kingsholm on the night of Thursday September 18, 1975 when deep in injury time there was a conversion kick from the touchline after flanker Eddie Pinkney had crashed over for a try in the corner to make the score 20-21.

"All Kingsholm gasped as the Butler kick failed," was the way the Citizen described that relatively rare moment when Pete Butler failed with a vital kick.

It was, as the saying goes, the final kick of the game. Referee Mike Titcombe called "time" and Begles had won the encounter 21-20 on their first - and until today, their only - visit to Kingsholm.

"Sparkling Rugby In Kingsholm Thriller" was how the Citizen headlined their report. Mind you, in the autumn of 1975 any sporting excitement was described as a thriller, thank to the hyperbole of one Muhammad Ali and his TKO in the 15th of Joe Frazier in the "Thriller in Manila".

The Begles game certainly came up to expectations. Begles were the 1969 French champions and Gloucester had won the inaugural cup competition in April 1972.

There had to be a certain amount of hype for this match. Gloucester had given a £350 guarantee to the touring French club and the match was "all pay" in a bid not to be out of pocket. So such phrases as "the best in English and French rugby" were used in a bid to encourage a good gate.

Few were disappointed, despite the fact that, as the Citizen put it, "the English lion was tamed in a contest which they might well have won."

The previous Saturday, Pete Butler had saved a Gloucester defeat at the hands of Coventry with a penalty kick in the dying moments. He was asked to do a similar feat with the conversion. But the magic deserted him.

Gloucester trailed 8-6 at the interval, the points coming from two Butler penalties - one of them from almost 50 yards. But the second half saw

Gloucester having the better of the play, but with little reward. The first try was scored by Alan Brinn who scored in the corner, diving over from a line-out. Butler booted the conversion and added another penalty to stay in touch.

Begles opened their account with a 17th minute try by fullback Bordessoules. Hooker Michel Carrethey crossed for two tries and when flanker Villate retrieved a loose ball and ran for the line to score the fourth try for the visitors, a grandstand finale was set-up.

John Watkins, captaining the side as Mike Burton was out with injury (he picked up a knee injury on that summer's England tour of Australia), and his players refused to give up. With the score 21-15 in favour of the French club, Gloucester mounted attack after attack.

The French cracked, and Pinkney, whose rugby took him from Matson to Gloucester before returning to Redwell Road, took advantage to close the gap to a single point.

Gloucester might well have won the match, but for some spirited defensive play from Begles. Late in the game John Haines intercepted and made a dash for the line. Bordessoules was having none of it and he stopped Haines five yards short of a score.

"The entente was not always cordial," the Citizen reported. Begles had several warnings for extra curricular activities from Titcombe, who got in some French conversation practice with a general warning to captain Bernard Junca.

Gloucester Team: P. Butler, J. Dix, R. Jardine, J. Bayliss, R. Etheridge, D. Pointon, P. Kingston, K. Richardson, K. Nicholls, R. Gwilliam, A. Brinn, J. Fidler, J. Watkins, E. Pinkney, J. Haines.

There is every possibility that on this second meeting with Begles, there will be a Fidler in the second row. If Rob can stay healthy against Ebbw Vale

In matches against French teams, Gloucester has won two of the four encounters. The wins, both in France, were against Paris St. Français (13-3 in 1912) and Stade Toulouse (18-13 in 1911). Gloucester has yet to beat a French team at Kingsholm. The first team from across La Manche was French Universities who won 17-0 in 1966; then came Begles...