

FIRST DIVISION

RUGBY

P R O M A G



FOUNDED 1873

Vol 1/7

£2.00

ENGLAND'S WINGING STREAK

Alastair Hignell investigates
England's wing situation

A NEW CODE FOR A NEW ERA

by Robert Armstrong



FDR

FIRST DIVISION
RUGBY

NOT JUST FOR KICKS

Peter Jackson

Westbury

GLOUCESTER
v
BOURGAIN

at Kingsholm
Sunday 27th October 1996
Kick off 3.00 pm



FOUNDED 1873

Sunday 27th October 1996 Kick-off 2.00pm

GLOUCESTER 9
Cherry & White

BOURGOIN 24

15	Audley Lumsden	Full Back	Nigel Geany	15
14	Mike Peters	Right Wing	Laurent Leflamand	14
13	Alastair Saverimutto	Centre	Alexandre Peclier	13
12	Andy Metcalfe	Centre	Stephanie Glas/David Janin	12
11	Paul Holford	Left Wing	Laurinet Belligoi	11

10	Mark Mapletoft	Outside Half	Gilles Cassagne	10
9	Scott Benton	Scrum Half	Nicolas Guilhot	9

1	Tony Windo	Prop	Phillippe Vessiller	1
2	Phil Greening	Hooker	Frederic Grange	2
3	Warwick Bullock	Prop	David Morgan	3
4	Mark Cornwell	Lock	Jean Daude	4
5	Dave Sims *	Lock	Marc Cecillon *	5
6	Ed Pearce	Flanker	Alexander Chazalet	6
7	Nathan Carter	Flanker	Michael Malafosse	7
8	Simon Deverux	No.8	Pierre Raschi	8

16	Martyn Kimber	Replacements	Pascal Fernandez/David Janin	16
17	Don Caskie		Vincent Frediere	17
18	Laurie Beck		Julien Frier	18
19	Adey Powles		Frederic Nibelle	19
20	John Hawker		Jean Pierre Sanchez	
21	Andy Stanley		Laurent Gomez	

Referee
T Rowlands (WRU)

(I) International
* Captain

Touch Judges
H Lewis (WRU)
P Rees (WRU)

Round Deux

Peter Arnold

I know, if you take the European Conference as a whole, this is round 'quatre' rather than 'deux', but much more significant as far as that will test the ingenuity of even coaches of Richard Hill's eminence, and there aren't too many of those. The Welsh sides have certainly found this to be so, as have, to a somewhat lesser extent, the English clubs, even though none of them have, as yet, found it necessary to postpone matches.

And if that's true at official level, things can't be any easier for the players. Had you realised that, by the time November 1st rolls around, Gloucester will have played no fewer than seven games in one calendar month? What's more, every one of them will have been competitive for one reason or another.

Even in this professional era, you can't ask your first-choice players to perform at that level of intensity for any length of time. You'll simply burn them out, just when the most important of the competitions from our point of view, the Courage, is about to enter a vital stage. And when, to pile one thing on another, we're beginning to think seriously about the Pilkington Cup.

Consequently, you get the sort of situation where Richard Hill, in his considerable wisdom, found it necessary to field an away team against the strongest side in Wales without all three of our England squad players - and one of them the Captain.

Again, I'm speaking purely personally, so don't anyone try to read anything official into what I am about to say, but I don't believe that trying to run Courage League matches and Welsh and European Conferences all more-or-less at the same time is really in the best interests of anyone. The European and Welsh competitions are already becoming devalued, because no one knows the real relative strengths of sides, even after four rounds of the Euro.

Which brings us squarely back to today. The fact that Bourgoin beat Begles Bordeaux, who

beat us, doesn't really tell us much. After all, Gloucester beat Pontypridd, who beat Bath, who beat Gloucester, so what inference can one draw from that?

Perhaps the best thing to do is to take each match as it comes, voicing our extreme pleasure at being able to welcome our formidable visitors to Kingsholm. We've always admired the flair and imagination for which French sides have always been noted, and very much hope to see that demonstrated on the best playing surface in English club Rugby.

You are all very welcome, Bourgoin. We hope you have an opportunity to see something of historic Gloucester while you are here, and that you thoroughly enjoy your visit to Kingsholm.

And don't leave it for 21 years before you come again.

ABJECT APOLOGIES

I had an almost apologetic phone call from no less a personage than Jim Jarrett the other day. He said that he hoped I wouldn't mind him mentioning it, but was there any reason why his name had been omitted from the list of Committee Members appearing elsewhere in this programme?

Well obviously, all the apologies should be on the other foot, if you don't mind the mangled metaphor. To leave out someone like Jim is quite unforgiveable. So I did the only thing any red-blooded English programme editor can do in such circumstances.

I grovelled.

I also assured him that his name would certainly be inserted this week, or I would be down at Bristol performing vasectomy operations on the assembled staff at Promag with the edge of a rusty tin can.

So take due note Promag. I think we've got baked beans for supper.
Sorry Jim.

'Up & Under' is no 'Pie in the Sky'

Peter Arnold

It must be a case of great minds thinking alike, if you can use such a term in relation to Mark Payne. Hard on the heels of the news that the Gloucester Operatic and Dramatic Society are to present John Godber's extremely funny rugby-based show 'Up and Under' later this month, comes the revelation that a film of the same piece is in production. It is to feature Samantha Janus, who plays 'Nicola' the toothsome waitress in BBC1's detective-cookery series that has won highly satisfactory ratings on a Sunday evening.

No, that isn't her in our photograph. the GODS bow to no one in their supply of feminine pulchritude, as you can readily see for yourself.

'Up and Under' will be performed (and I use the word advisedly) from Wednesday, November 13th to Saturday, November 16th at the New Olympus Theatre in Barton Street. As far as I know, it is the first time that Gloucester RFC has actually become involved with such an event, and are, indeed, the show's official Sponsors.

Before the philistines among us start complaining, the word 'sponsorship' doesn't, in this case, imply throwing any of your hard-earned gate money

at a bunch of long-haired theatricals. The club's contribution includes supplying a set of Gloucester strips as costumes for the playing sequences, an act of generosity which is to be matched by Bath, who will, it is hoped, provide a similar number of their strips for the show's Bad Guys to wear.

In addition you can buy your tickets at the club office right now, or at normal opening times from here on until First Night. They cost £5.00 each, which seems a great bargain when you consider that the show lasts around two hours, and you pay more than that to watch a match which lasts 80 minutes.

Of course, you can obtain tickets by the usual methods, too. By calling into the theatre box office, or ordering by phone on 01452 505089 or 525917.

In fact, I'll make things even easier by providing a coupon.

I do recommend 'Up and Under' for a good laugh and a great night out. It isn't entirely coincidental that the show is being presented during November, which is something of a desert as far as home First XV matches are concerned. If you can't watch the real thing, why not go along and enjoy something rugby-oriented at least?

Probably see you there



Footlight-angle view of rehearsal for the GODS production of John Godber's 'Up and Under'

Please supply me with tickets @ £5.00 each, for the evening of Novemberth

I enclose my remittance for £.....

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

.....

.....postcode.....

Tel.

(for use if the night you prefer is fully booked)

TO: New Olympus Theatre, Barton Street, Gloucester

Telephone: 01452 505089 or 525917

A STAMPED ADDRESSED ENVELOPE WOULD BE APPRECIATED

Orrell's Switched - Again!

It's an ill wind.... We hear that Orrell are having trouble with their floodlights. Sorry about that, but it does mean that our scheduled trip to Edgehall Road on the evening of October 30th has had to be postponed. Hopefully, the game will now take place on Saturday, November 16th, the day of the European Conference Semi Finals, in which we no longer have any realistic interest.

The good thing about that is that we shall probably get more supporters along, to a match which we positively must win. Bob Barge informs me that a coach, or coaches, will leave Kingsholm at 10.00am, and a seat will cost you £7.50.

Before that, however, we have our Euro trip to London Irish on November 2nd. Coaches will depart Kingsholm at 10.30, to ensure plenty of time to get across London, and will, again, cost £7.50.

As, indeed will a similar trip to Wakefield on November 23rd. 10.00 start.

West Hartlepool on November 9th is a more formidable geographical proposition, of course. Another must-win game against a constantly improving side. That one will leave Kingsholm at 8.00am, and will cost £14.00.

Of course, there's always Andy Mitchell's 'one night stand' at West Hartlepool. Don't know if there are any seats left for that popular overnigher, but it might be worth enquiring.

CATCHING 'EM YOUNG

We have a young lady doing the honours for us this week. Jessica Galling, from Abbeydale, is performing the duties of Match Mascot. She is eleven years old and attends St. Peter's School.

A lady of many parts is our Jessica. She owns her own pony, named 'Beauty', plays netball and squash, and on the artistic side, dances and plays the flute. She still enjoys coming along to Kingsholm, in spite of the demands on her time imposed by that lot, and has

ambitions to play rugby when she's a bit older.

Thanks a lot for sparing the time, Jessica !

THE NIGHT THE TANNOY FAILED

We had problems making ourselves heard on the evening of the Begles Bordeaux game. No - the Shed hadn't gone down with a collective bout of laryngitis: I'm referring to the failure of the Tannoy system. In fact, it did it twice.

I'm told that a condenser in the amplifier failed, so we switched to the standby amplifier, and that packed up as well.

Our thanks to John Hamblett for herculean, though fruitless, efforts to get the thing going, and missing just about the whole match for that reason.

One side effect was that one of our 'Golden Gamble' prizes wasn't claimed. Somewhere out there is a Mr./Mrs./Miss, or even Monsieur, Lambert who has £50.00 coming, if he can still produce ticker number 032605.

Sorry about that. Perhaps we should employ Town Crier Alan Myatt.

TAILPIECE

Seems to be my day for apologies. You may recall that young Craig Balmer, son of groundsman, Tom, acted as Match Mascot at the Begles Bordeaux game. I've now heard from Mrs Balmer, pointing out that Craig was described as one of three brothers, which is one too many.


Where was the other one coming from ? she wanted to know, and did I know something she didn't ?

Not unreasonable, but my conscience is clear. It was the Fair Geraldine's fault, not mine, and I have documentary evidence to prove it.

Sorry, Mrs Balmer.



Ed Martin



The European Conference marches on, but for us at Kingsholm, the competition is effectively over. That breakaway try deep in injury time 10 days ago combined with the result at St. Helens last weekend has put an end to any dreams of progressing from the "pool" matches into the semi finals.

Of course, there is nothing new about finishing second at St. Helens. Last weekend's programme had a slogan on the front cover: "Kings at Holm, but not at St. Helens".

Around seventy years ago, the slogan might well have been used for the Swansea vs Gloucester fixture of November 6, 1926. On that occasion, Swansea scored four tries a penalty goal and a drop goal, with Gloucester managing a sole try from Roy James. Both clubs went into the match with a string of disappointing results behind them. Gloucester had fallen at Kingsholm to both Aberavon and Oxford University, while Swansea - hit with injuries- had been beaten by Cardiff at the Arms Park and by Neath at home.

Gloucester selected virtually a full strength side for the game - a shoulder injury picked up against the mid-week match against Oxford University meant that captain Tom Voyce was sidelined. And on the day, Hughes missed the train (he ended up playing for Gloucester "A" against Yorkley).

Gloucester had never won at St. Helen's. Swansea had only posted four wins in 11 matches and their selected team for Gloucester had caused some ironical comment. So it was that some 2,000 Swansea fans arrived at St. Helen's expecting to see Gloucester's first ever win at the ground.

Bill Bailey did not cover the match - in fact the November 6, 1926 issue of the Citizens Football Final contains no report from Mr. Bailey, a rarity in itself. In his

place was "D.G.C." who, commenting on the Swansea side, wrote:

"Two half-backs were on the wings and a winger played in the centre, while one or two young forwards were introduced into the side. It seemed as if this combination were put on their mettle for the backs at any rate gave a rare display of combined work, varied with unexpected movements, and the whole side played together as if they had known each other's possibilities without limit. Most of the things they did panned out all right, whereas Gloucester could never get going with any united movement or with any appearance of clinching their somewhat ragged attacks.

"Without minimising the extent of Swansea's victory, one could affirm they had all the good fortune that was going, as often happens when a team reaches top form. Having given Swansea all credit for a handsome victory the fact remains that territorially Gloucester attacked as much as they did but with this difference, that whereas Swansea always had method and tried to introduce unorthodox tactics, the Gloucester pressure was hearty enough and only lacked a plan.

"James had the satisfaction of scoring Gloucester's solitary try, and that came only after he had dribbled the ball some twenty yards along with Hemming." Also commenting on the game, the Swansea Sporting News wrote: "When English and Welsh clubs meet we generally get good football. We had it on Saturday afternoon, and if there were any imperfections in the Swansea back division, one noted with gratification an improvement in the team work. ... Gloucester's outstanding player was Millington, the outside half. They were also well served in the sense of clean fielding and directional kicking by (fullback George) Thomas."

As Steve Hawker Sees It

I don't consider myself an Internet buff, although I do find the whole thing useful. But I must confess that I was delighted to discover that good old Glawster now has its own (unofficial) web page. For the uninitiated, that means that we have a sort of electronic, hi-tech 'Shedhead', available to anyone, anywhere in the world who has the right computer equipment and software and the price of a local phone call.

"Aha !", I thought to myself, "And likewise, Oho ! Here's a guy who ought to be expressing himself to all those folk who prefer to stick to traditional printers' ink on paper." So I issued the appropriate invitation, had my arm bitten off, and here is the result.

Best of luck, Steve Hawker. Hope your enterprise has all the success in the world. The World Wide Web may never be the same again.

For those of you who still haven't heard of the Internet, it is one great big mish-mosh of computers all capable of talking to one another. Via the Internet you can find out something about everything, using a part of the Internet known as the World Wide Web. At least that's what I thought until last summer when I tried to find out something about Glawster. As I found very little to do with Northern Hemisphere Rugby except some poor misguided soul waffling on about Barf, and inspired by the style of a certain excellent fanzine, I decided it was time Glawster fans could have somewhere to go for news about a proper, decent team and so I put together the unofficial Gloucester RFC web site.

Thanks to some fantastic support from Ed Martin, and also to a spot of free publicity from Peter Arnold and Katie Coker, Glawster's very own web site is receiving visits from ShedHeads all over the world. I've received messages from Australia and Canada and even from such far-flung Rugby-starved outposts as Cirencester, all from Glawster fans stranded in the Rugby deserts of the world. Richard Hill may be pleased to know that many of the messages I have received support his policies and welcome the new playing style. If you've visited the site I'm always happy to hear from fellow ShedHeads and I welcome all comments, suggestions and biased reports.

So now Glawster has joined in the communications revolution on the information

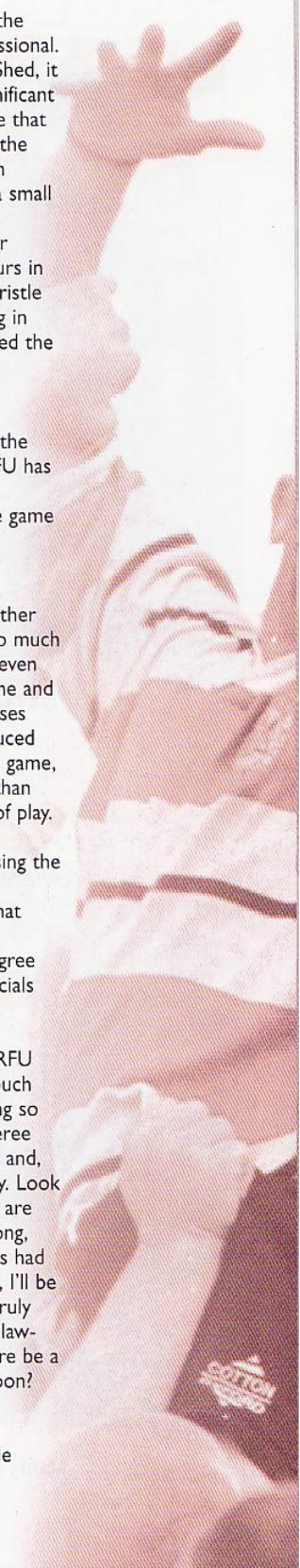
superhighway (whatever that means) at the same time as Rugby becomes fully professional. But from my usual vantage point in the Shed, it seems as though there is one rather significant part of the game which has yet to realise that this is now a professional sport, namely the referees and touch judges. Of course I'm biased, I'm a Glawster fan and I've paid a small fortune for the privilege of yelling at the officials, but it does appear that Glawster aren't the only victims of the last amateurs in the top flight of Rugby Union. Just ask Bristle and Listeria, victims of hapless refereeing in recent weeks. Even John Inverdale spotted the total lack of downward pressure by that Warps player.

Now I don't necessarily envy the job of the man in the middle, but I do think the RFU has a absolute responsibility to support the referee, both in terms of the laws of the game and providing adequate assistance by empowering the touch judges.

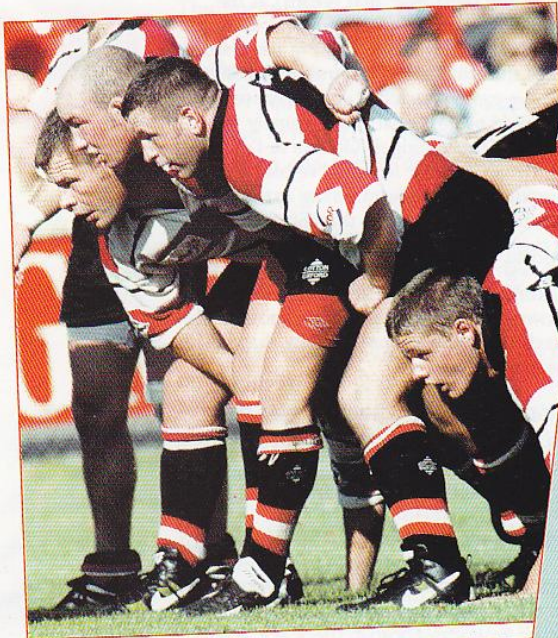
So what lessons can Rugby learn from other sports that have been professional for so much longer. In American Football there are seven officials on the field (they are all part-time and unpaid but have to attend umpire's courses every year), Cricket has recently introduced the third umpire, and even in that other game, the officials on the touch line do more than just wave a flag when the ball goes out of play. So many times these sports have made adjustments to the provision of supervising the playing of the game, including television replays, all in the interests of ensuring that infringements are dealt with fairly and consistently. I'm sure many of you will agree that this is one area where the RFU officials are coming up short.

How much longer will it be before the RFU wake up and give more power to the touch judges? Why is the standard of refereeing so inconsistent? Why can't Jim Fleming referee every Glaws match? Sadly I think a swift and, satisfactory resolution is light years away. Look at the stupid mess the RFU and EPRUC are embroiled in. I'm sure it won't be too long, look at the effect television coverage has had on the other major sports. In any event, I'll be there in the Shed singing along to that truly uplifting West Country Rugby hymn, "Glawster, Glaw-ster, Glaw-ster.....". Can there be a better place to be on a Saturday afternoon? (or Sunday, or Wednesday, or....)

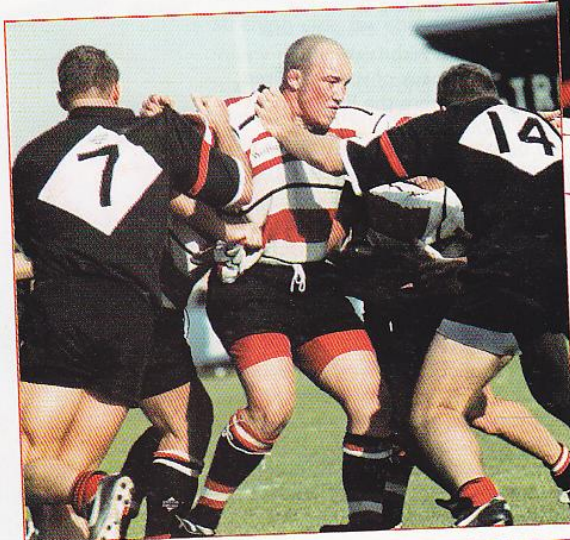
Enjoy today's game and may the best side called Glawster win!



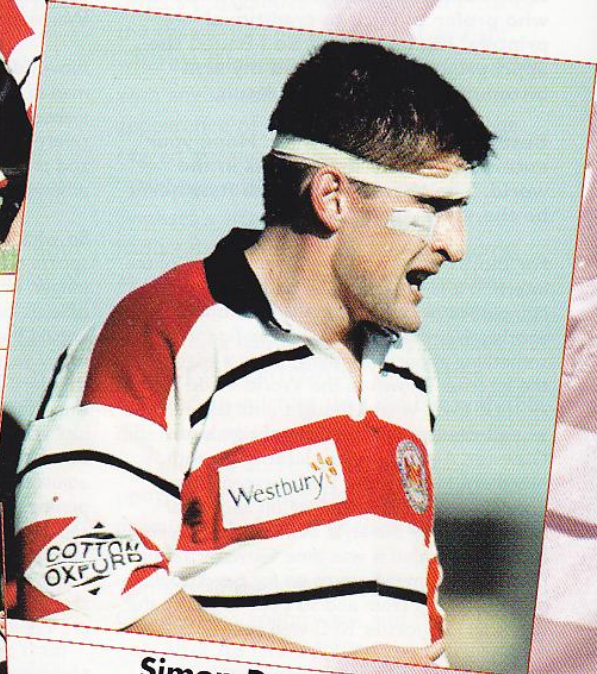
Picture page



Scrum down



Phil Greening shields the ball from the Saracens



Simon Devereux