

ORRELL

COURAGE LEAGUE
DIVISION 1

ORRELL v GLOUCESTER

Saturday 16th November, 1996

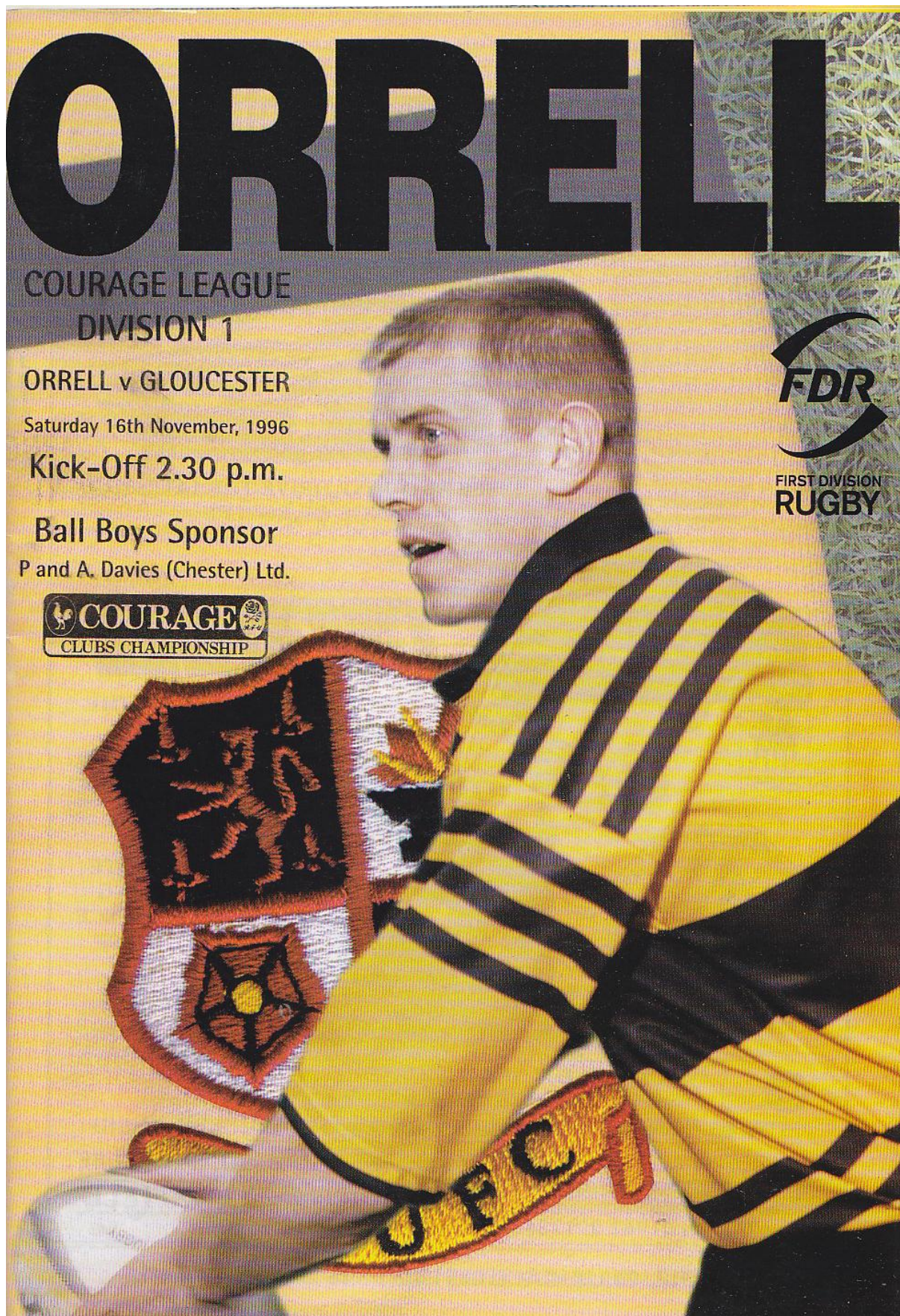
Kick-Off 2.30 p.m.

Ball Boys Sponsor

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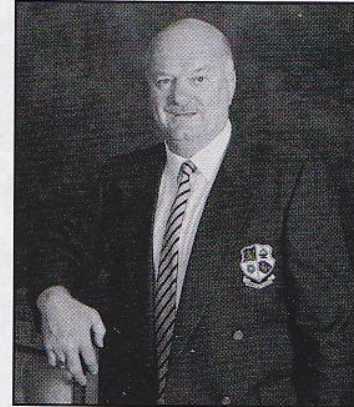
FIRST DIVISION
RUGBY



FROM THE PRESIDENT



DES SEABROOK 1996-1998



A sincere welcome to our friends from Gloucester today. Both sides will be striving for a win, so a competitive game is on the cards, as always. A win would give a big confidence boost to the Orrell lads. Last week's score at Sale didn't do justice to a big team effort. Congratulations to three of last week's side, Jonathan Seabrook, Richard Nelson and Richard Higgs who all made their Courage League debuts.

The long running saga between EPRUC and the RFU hasn't yet been finalised, which is a discredit to the game and the individuals concerned. From where we stand within EPRUC, the wrong people are representing

us in the negotiations. Orrell, through their representative, have stated their case on numerous occasions but with little success. However, a majority of clubs now seem to have similar opinion to ourselves and I feel that some form of agreement will be signed soon.

In the last fortnight the club have organised their Annual Bonfire and Fireworks Display and a President's Sunday Lunch. Both were excellent events, and made a considerable profit. Yes we made some money and I would like to thank all those people who helped and supported those events. However, we could have done with more help and more support and that was a disappointment. Please support any future events.

today's visitors

NOT MANY OF US LEFT

The likes of us must stick together. There aren't many of us left.

Not that it's a problem. In spite of the geographical divide, there are more similarities between Gloucester and Orrell than there are differences. We both have excellent grounds, with welcoming clubhouses. We both have a long and honourable rugby tradition. Both sides are difficult to beat at home.

We both have an excellent band of vociferous - even feared - supporters, and we make no apology for that. Paul Ackford, writing in the 'Daily Telegraph' recently, described the Gloucester crowd as 'one-eyed', and "what's wrong with that?" we'd like to know. If you don't shout for your own team, it's the whole Harlequins budget to a used jockstrap that no one else will.

More important, we're both Members' Clubs, organised around Limited Companies, where virtually all the shares are owned by the Club, and therefore by the Members themselves. Which, in my extremely humble opinion, is the way things ought to be.

Contrast that with recent news from Bath. They've changed their name from the traditional 'Bath Football Club', to simply 'Bath Rugby'. One must applaud the rather belated insertion of 'Rugby' into their title, but isn't there something Freudian about the omission of the word, 'Club'? Don't they want to be a club any more? Are they acknowledging the fact that they're becoming a business, and very little else? No doubt dyed-in-the-wool Bath supporters, and I know and value quite a few of them, would deny that vehemently, but, when you come right down to it, does the ordinary fan have much say in the matter?

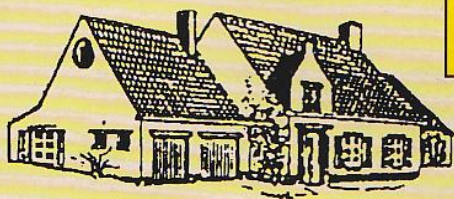
The vibes I get say that EPRUC is divided severely into two vastly differing factions: the clubs run by the predators who nipped in as soon as possible after the professional game became a reality, and those, like today's two opposing clubs, who are at least trying to adapt the essential ethos of the game of Rugby Union to a cataclysmically changing world.

At the moment, those two factions must hang together in their battles with the RFU, or they will most assuredly hang separately. Or would that be such a bad thing? The jury's out on that one.

I think the point is that you can buy a team but you can't buy a club. Today's game amply illustrates that. I profoundly hope that Gloucester wins it, and I shall be as sick as anyone if the result goes the other way. You wouldn't expect me to feel any different, would you? But if Orrell do bring it off, as they well could, then I shall certainly have the feeling that we were beaten by a good old club to whom I shall always offer my sincere respect and good wishes.

I wouldn't feel that way about everyone.

PETER ARNOLD - Programme Editor Gloucester Rugby Club



*"Best Wishes to Orrell
for a Successful Season"*

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