



FOUNDED 1873

Vol 1/14

£2.00

FIRST DIVISION

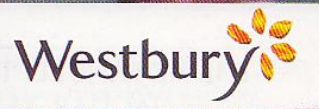
RUGBY

P R O M A G



BYE BYE CALCUTTA

Ireland v England



**GLOUCESTER
v
ORRELL**

at Kingsholm
Saturday 8th February 1997
Kick off 3.00 pm

A Slight Case of Deja Vu

You remember that feeling when your opposite number in the line-out gets his foot on top of yours as you're jostling for position. It doesn't really hurt, but there is that niggle that it's something you should do something about in a minute, if only you could think what that might be.

I well remember having just such a prickle at the back of my mind on arrival for the first time at Orrell's very pleasant Edge Hall Road ground. Something was trying to tell me something, but I couldn't articulate what it was. I was halfway down my third pint of something suitably North Country and nourishing before the murkier recesses of my subconscious finally gave up the ghost and revealed the source of my preoccupation.

I felt at home. The place was reminding me of Kingsholm.

Not physically. The pitch is smaller, for a start, and slopes away subtly into - it seems - all directions, and some dimensions probably best described in terms of Einstein's General Theory of Relativity. At least, it must feel like that to the players when they get trapped into that dip in one corner, and those bloody great Orrell forwards simply won't let you get out. I think it's called 'home advantage', and we're the last side in the world to be able to complain about that.

No. The resemblance to Kingsholm isn't physical. It's more subtle than that. I suppose the in-word would be 'ambiance': a whole collection of impressions which amalgamate to tell you that, everything is fine, you're enjoying this, you're thoroughly at home here. Why, you could transplant a job lot of Orrell supporters into the 'Jockey' or the 'Dean's' at around 2.00pm of a home Saturday, and if it weren't for the accents and the sported colours, I doubt if the respective bar staffs would notice the difference.

In the period of which I'm thinking they even still had a custom which we, at Kingsholm, recall from the days B.C. (Before Complex), when overburdened supporters could go and relieve overworked plumbing in the space

behind the stand. No one minded at Orrell, apart from one good lady, fortunate enough to live in a house adjoining the ground, who used to ring up and complain. Not until about two-thirds of the way through the game, I noticed. Apparently it used to happen just about every week.

Never have the similarities between our two great clubs been more marked than they are this season. Both of us have struggled to come to terms with the indecently rushed new era, both on the field and off. Both sets of supporters are deeply suspicious of the 'cheque book' clubs, and of their opponents on the RFU side of the equation. Both of us are 'member' clubs, rooted in the traditions, customs and usages of the 'old' game, seeking to blend the best of the old with the brighter elements of the new.

And both of us are going to have to be dragged kicking and screaming into Division Two of the Courage League, if that's the way the jockstrap moulders. To date, as all the world knows, Gloucester look more likely to avoid the Outer Darkness than our respected and welcome visitors, but there's still time - barely - for the Wigan lads to turn things around. They have suffered more than anyone from the defections brought about by the economic realities of the professional game, but they are bringing a decent side on, as time goes by.

No doubt they'll see today as one of the chances to start the renaissance of their very fine club, and if they were playing anyone but Gloucester, I would be cheering them on. We can't afford any such luxuries however, and I'm sure that Orrell won't be expecting any favours to come their way out on the field. They'll be doing their damndest, and it would be more easy to come unstuck against them than most pundits would have you believe.

But, whatever happens on the Sacred Turf, today, it's great to see the Orrell lads here again. We hope everyone feels just as much at home here as I do at Edge Hall Road.

Peter Arnold

3 Gloucester News

Where Do We Go From Here?

I can't recall a season when I've had so many occasions to inform you about changes to the fixture list for one reason or another, or to keep you abreast of why we're playing whom and where. Add a touch of the Frost Giants around New Year time, and things do get complicated.

Here's a run-down on the Story So Far. Unless it's changed by the time you read this, that is.

Friday, February 14th, Gloucester v. Newport (Away) Anglo-Welsh Conference

Remember the Anglo-Welsh ? If memory serves we haven't lost in that competition yet, and put 76 points on Newbridge on our last encounter at Kingsholm. Newport, especially on their own pitch, will probably be an altogether sterner challenge, and could be well worth seeing.

At the time of writing, I haven't heard about any coaches, but that information may well be known to you by now.

Tuesday, February 18th, Gloucester v. Bristol (Away) Courage League, Division One

This is the game which switched from Saturday to Sunday on the weekend between Christmas and New Year, and then fell victim to the frost. Obviously, it's an absolutely vital game for us, and no less so for Bristol.

All right, so we beat them, here, in the Cup a couple of weeks ago, but there didn't appear to be much between the sides on that day, and this time we're taking them on on their own midden, as the saying goes. It's an encounter you surely won't want to miss.

Coaches will be leaving Kingsholm at 5.30, and cost a very reasonable £5.00. There's only ten days to go, so get your name down quick, if you haven't already done so.

Bob Barge asks me to point out that new lists are in operation for this game. In other words, if you had your name down for the aborted trip, then you haven't got it down any more. You'll have to re-book, so don't get caught out. He also asks me to ask you to let the office know if some catastrophe prevents you from making the trip after you've booked your seat, so that it can be re-allocated. Nothing worse than an empty seat on these occasions, is there ?

Saturday, February 22nd, Gloucester v. Wakefield, (Away) Pilkington Cup, Quarter Final

Ouch! Tricky old trip, this one. Looks all right on paper, of course: a First Division side visiting an outfit which was sitting at fifth spot in Division Two, last time I looked. But you and I know that it isn't quite like that.

We're still smarting over the defeat they inflicted on us in the Cup a couple of seasons ago. What's more, as recently as November 23rd, they beat us comprehensively at Wakefield to the tune of 24 points to 3.

"OK", you may say, "We're a better side than we were two seasons ago, and last November, we took a United-strength side to Wakefield." Both statements are perfectly true, but consider. Wakefield are only lying fifth in their division because the four teams above them are 'cheque book' clubs who have been able to buy themselves their teams. Had that not been so, our Cup opponents could well be sitting high, wide and handsome at the top of Division Two, with every prospect of joining next season's First Division. Indeed, if the threatened play-offs come in, then it only wants one of the top clubs to slip up, and they could make it, anyway.

So it's not going to be an easy game, whatever the pundits and the paperwork indicate. We can, and should, win it of course, and you could contribute to that desirable outcome by taking your lungs and your voice box up to Wakefield in two weeks time.

Now for the sordid details. As I write this (on Monday) we don't know when tickets for the game will become available, but I've no doubt that that information will be available by the time you read this. I do know the damage, however. Stand seats will cost £10.00, and their stand isn't all that big, so you'd do well to book as early as possible. Ground tickets will be available at £8.00 a throw.

At least two coaches will be making the trip, and you can climb aboard for just £9.00. Again, please book as soon as you can.

So there you are. I assume that the Wakefield engagement means that we won't be taking on Coventry on that same date, as originally envisaged. The next trip is to Wasps on Sunday, March 9th, but sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof, so I'll let you have more details about arrangements for that in Our Next, as they say.

Phew ! Glad I got that lot off my chest.

Peter Arnold

Not Letting the Grass Grow

Elsewhere in this magnificent example of late 20th Century English Literature, you'll find an ad. headed with a rather arty logo spelling out 'SFS' If you're a farmer, you won't need that explaining to you, but for all of us lesser mortals, the acronym stands for 'Select Feeds and Seeds'.

If you want to know what that has to do with Gloucester RFC, I'll simply state that we have the word of many informed judges that Kingsholm provides the best playing surface in England outside Twickenham. That means that someone has to supply high-quality grass seed, selected precisely for the purpose. In our case, that means SFS, and as many devotees of Gloucester know perfectly well, that means Bob Osborne.

Bob has been supporting Gloucester for as long as he, himself, can remember. He was sponsoring matches at Kingsholm long before he took the plunge and founded Select Feeds and Seeds. For the past few years, his company has been supplying the vital seed for maintaining the Sacred Turf.

I'm glad to be able to tell you that he has just been awarded the contract to continue to do so for the three seasons, which is great news for all concerned.

As I've always said, the Club should support the people who support Gloucester if at all possible, and that includes arch-afficionado, devout beer drinker, wit, raconteur, and all - around Good Egg, Bob Osborne.

Good on you, mate !

CATCHING 'EM YOUNG

Today's Match Mascot is a young man from Malvern, named Michael England. Don't recall that we've ever had a Mascot from that attractive town before, so he's especially welcome. He attends the Chase School, and apart from rugby, is into the other sort of football.

He also attends the local pony club with his brother Jon, where the pair of them indulge in triathlon, which seems fairly daunting. Thanks for coming, Michael.

WELL DONE TOFTY !

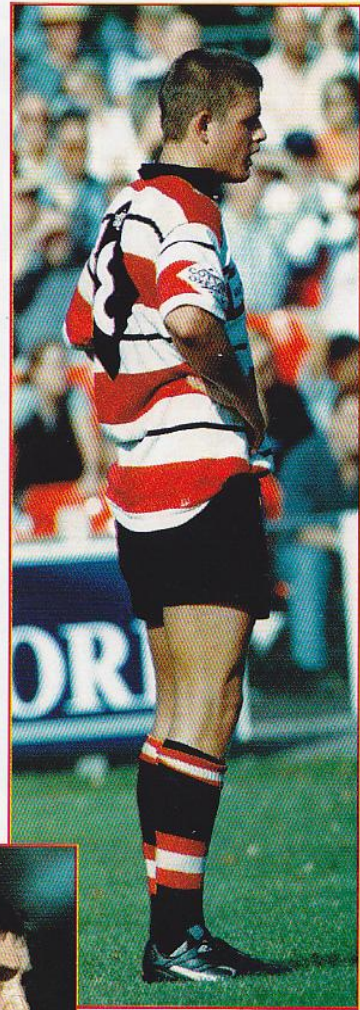
All our people seem to have acquitted themselves well in the latest spate of England 'A' and England Under 21 games. However, I think we must give pride of place to Mark Mapletoft for scoring a try against the tough Otago outfit. Hope it's not the last try he scores at Bristol, this season !

TAILPIECE

Sorry. Can't resist it. You'd think a firm based in Brislington would know that Bristol play in letters and not numbers, wouldn't you ? For your information, Visual Marketing chaps, Leicester do too. And they're here on March 22nd.

Peter Arnold

18 Gloucester News



THE HIGHEST STANDARDS COME AS STANDARD

You could settle for any one of a large number of standard security companies. But isn't your business worthy of the security company that sets the standards?

At Group 4 we have spent over 50 years leading the way in the security industry. Everything about our operation is superior. Our staff are the most thoroughly vetted and trained. Our range of services is totally comprehensive. And we tailor services to suit individual customer requirements.

It's hardly surprising then that we are Europe's largest and most successful security organisation.

So when you're thinking about security, choose the name that's synonymous with it. Group 4.

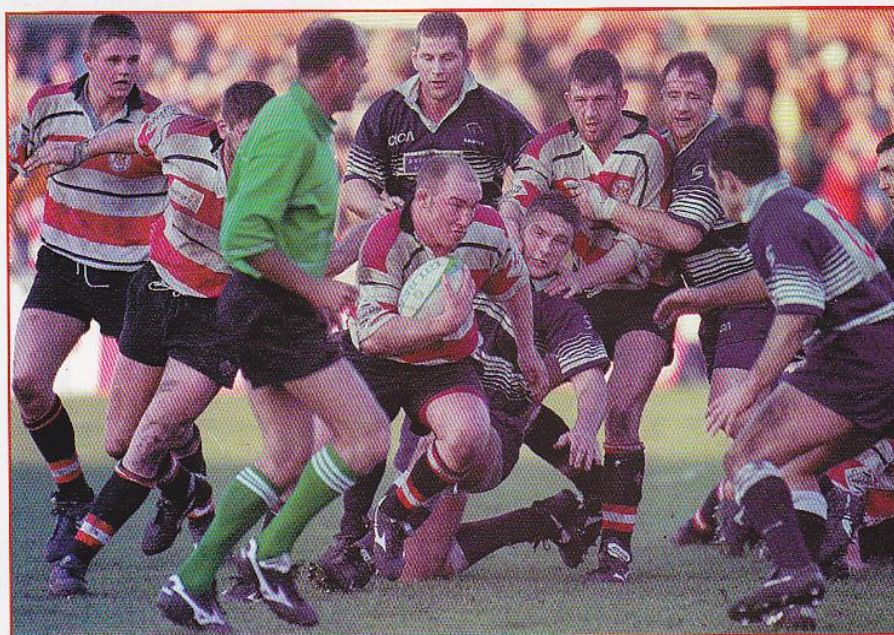
Or you could be putting your business at risk.

- DEDICATED GUARDING SERVICES
- MOBILE PATROLS
- KEYMASTER ALARM RESPONSE SERVICE
- UNIFORMED STORE GUARDS
- CASH IN TRANSIT (Scotland)
- SECURITY AND MANAGEMENT TRAINING
- ELECTRONIC SECURITY SYSTEMS



Keeping what's yours, yours.

Group 4 Total Security Limited, Farncombe House
Broadway, Worcestershire WR12 7IJ
Tel: (01386) 858585 Fax: (01386) 852861



Peter Arnold

Gloucester News 20



FOUNDED 1873



Saturday 8th February 1997 Kick-off 3.00pm

GLOUCESTER 30

Cherry & White

ORRELL 0

Orange & Black

| | | | | |
|----|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|----|
| 15 | Chris Catling | Full Back | S Taberner | 15 |
| 14 | Mike Peters T | Right Wing | J Naylor | 14 |
| 13 | Don Caskie | Centre | D Lyon | 13 |
| 12 | Martin Roberts | Centre | L Tuigamala | 12 |
| 11 | Mike Lloyd T | Left Wing | R Hitchmough | 11 |
| 10 | Mark Mapletoft 2T2C2P | Outside Half | M McCarthy | 10 |
| 9 | Scott Benton | Scrum Half | S W Cook | 9 |
| 1 | Tony Windo | Prop | M Worsley | 1 |
| 2 | Phil Greening (I) | Hooker | MScott | 2 |
| 3 | Andy Deacon | Prop | S Turner | 3 |
| 4 | Rob Fidler | Lock | C Brierly | 4 |
| 5 | Dave Sims * | Lock | C Cussani | |
| 6 | Ed Pearce | Flanker | P Anglesea | 6 |
| 7 | Nathan Carter | Flanker | R Higgs | 7 |
| 8 | Simon Devereux | No.8 | J Huxley | 8 |
| 16 | Laurie Beck | Replacements | J Cunoick | 16 |
| 17 | Martyn Kimber | | P Hamer | 17 |
| 18 | Chris Fortey | | P Rees | 18 |
| 19 | Mark Cornwell | | P Newton | 19 |
| 20 | | | | |
| 21 | | | | |

Referee

Ed Morrison (RFU/Bristol)

(I) International

* Captain

Touch Judges

S Savage (RFU)

M Firby (RFU)