



FOUNDED 1873

RUGBY

P R O M A G

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**GLOUCESTER
V**


LEICESTER

29th March 1997



**LOADSA
MONEY!**


THE
PILKINGTON
CUP

Westbury 

Better Late...

They say you can have too much of a good thing, but it would have been nice to have entertained what is, in my own humble opinion, the best team in England, twice in a week. We might have persuaded our respected and welcome visitors from Leicester simply to stay on and sample the delights of our fair City during the intervening days. They would probably all be a few pounds heavier and decidedly hung-over by today if they had taken that option, and I suppose that's not on in these puritanical professional days. There was a time, of course...

Not that many of today's Tigers are strangers to Gloucester. Whatever the final line-up, I suppose most of the players will have visited Kingsholm before: I believe even recent signing Joel Stransky has - correct me if I'm wrong - played here with one or another of the South African outfits who have visited us over the past few seasons.

I've said before that, of all the top sides who visit Kingsholm regularly, the one we welcome most sincerely is Leicester. There is a fellow feeling between the two clubs, and it is to be hoped that the stresses and strains of the new era won't be allowed to dilute that. There have been some epic encounters between us, over the years, at home, away, and on neutral ground. I can't resist reminding our visiting contingent that the last time our two sides met in the Cup, Gloucester won. And that was at Twickenham.

One final thing about our friends from Leicester. While they have recruited as energetically and successfully as anyone, they haven't ended up with one of those line-ups consisting almost entirely of peripatetic foreign mercenaries which are starting to blight the English game. I did hear that the Dalai Lama was negotiating with Bedford, but that's probably only a rumour.

We're in for an absorbing game. Leicester won't find it easy at Kingsholm - ask their deadly rivals,

Northampton - but we certainly hope that everyone who has come along has a thoroughly good time with us.

One final point. I'm sure that, if Gloucester can't win the either the League or the Cup, we'd rather Leicester did than anyone.

KEEP CLEAR !

I suppose I might as well get the Dire Warning over as soon as possible. Please don't be tempted to try to watch the game from steps or gangways. Not only does it infringe Fire, Police and Safety at Sports Grounds regulations, (and for all I know, rules governing BSE, Newcastle Disease and HIV as well), but you'd never forgive yourself if there were to be an emergency and help couldn't get through in time, would you ?

OUR BOY DONE GOOD

Wasn't it good to watch Phil Greening play the whole of the second half for England against Wales at the Arms Park ? What's more, to my strictly non-professional eye, it seemed as if he did very little wrong.

Obviously, he won all his strikes, which is no more than you would expect from an International hooker, and he also appeared to be where he ought to be pretty well all the time. What's more, his throw in hit the right spot every single time, which might have been a significant feature in England's domination of the line-out during the whole of the second half. And one of those was a real pressure affair, right on the England line.

My favourite moment came, however, when big Craig Quinnett came away with the ball, only to be hit, at full gallop, by Our Mr. Greening - who then, quite simply, bounced off.

Phil's not used to that sort of thing. If he hits a bloke he usually stays hit. I expect Mr. Quinnett will have gone down in Phil's little black book for that one.

Peter Arnold

5 Gloucester News

Combined Operations

I would think that the likes of Graham Parker, Dick Stephens and even Gilbert Laird Jessop, 'The Croucher' himself, are looking down from whatever Valhalla old all-round sportsmen go to, and smiling approvingly at us, just at the moment. They, of course, are just three of the select band of superheroes who played cricket for Gloucestershire and rugby for Gloucester, and the idea of a subscription arrangement between two good old County's two premier sporting organisations would have pleased them mightily.

In case you'd missed it, the arrangement is that anyone who takes out full Membership in both Gloucester RFC and Gloucestershire CCC will be entitled to a 10% discount on both subscriptions. And that's an attractive consideration when you come to work things out.

Furthermore, any company or organisation who involve themselves in corporate hospitality at Kingsholm and the Gloucester and Cheltenham Cricket Festivals will be able to negotiate a discount as well. Good idea, isn't it?

I wonder if GRFC couldn't learn a thing or two from other Gloucestershire CCC initiatives as well. Company memberships? Direct Debit arrangements? Worth thinking along those lines.

MISSING OUT

Spare a thought for John Godsell, landlord of the Vauxhall in Barton Street. He missed out on the televised doings at the Arms Park last Saturday.

As you may have noticed, Gloucester Operatic and Dramatic Society have been staging a production of 'Camelot' within the last couple of weeks. That involved the appearance of a horse on stage. Yes; a real horse, not your pantomime variety.

No problem; they found a small pony without any trouble, but the question then arose, what do do with it between performances? Nothing daunted, Mr. Godsell agreed to stable the quadruped in one of his outbuildings for a few days, and all went swimmingly.

Until the Saturday afternoon, that is, when John decided that it would be a nice idea to take Toby,

(appropriately named for a Bass pub), out into the car park so that the local children could make his acquaintance. Everyone enjoyed the experience, including Toby, who having spent some time out in the sunshine with the kids, decided that he didn't want to go back in just yet.

They did eventually manage to persuade him to return to his nice warm stable. But not for two hours, and John just got himself settled in front of his telly in time to see the final whistle blow at the Arms Park.

It was particularly galling for John because, as you may have seen in the Press, Phil Greening spent some time in the Vauxhall, a couple of weeks ago, supporting a fund-raising effort on behalf of the Multiple Sclerosis Society. And John Godsell missed his involvement in the match completely.

John Godsell is now disenchanted with our equine friends.

"Bloody thing!" he summed up.

CATCHING 'EM YOUNG

Welcome to Christopher Powderly, who is our Match Mascot for today. He is eight years old, and has a sister Becki (nine), with whom he attends Minchinghampton School. The pair of them live in Eastcombe, as does their dad, Kevin, who is GRFC's Colts Recruitment Officer, and a member of the Colts coaching team.

Young Chris is a keen sportsman. Apart from playing rugby, he's also well into soccer - supports Aston Villa - and swimming.

Chris is still talking about a recent visit to his school by Dave Simms, who spent a couple of hours coaching the boys - and girls. Not surprisingly, he rates Dave as one of his favourite players, along with Mark Mapletoft and Phil Greening, who he has also met.

Perhaps we should also spread a little alarm and despondency among the Opposition by pointing out that Chris has proved to be a lucky mascot this season. Gloucester has won every game he has attended at Firsts, United and Colts level. Keep up the good work, Chris!

Peter Arnold

How John Hall Sees It

How is it that the professional clubs choose such flatulent names for their organisations? 'EPRUC' closely resembles a hiccup, while 'ERP' isn't much better, being decidedly burpish in nature. I'm not sure that JOHN HALL can answer that question, but he's definitely the man to ask on associated matters. Don't get me wrong - I'm not talking about the unfortunate unwaged John Hall from down the road, or the be-Knighted gent from Geordieland, but our own John Hall, of Gullivers Travels, GRFC Board Member and the club's Director on English First Division Rugby Ltd.

He has spent untold hours helping to negotiate the settlement between the clubs and the RFU, so should know whereof he speaks.

As an example of just how assiduous he is, he wasn't able to write this piece for me before leaving for the World Cup Sevens. Nothing daunted, he penned it during a bumpy ride at 37,000 feet, and had it faxed to me directly from his Hong Kong hotel at the crack of dawn, our time.

My feeling was that we should all be told something about the much-wrangled settlement, and what it means to the likes of us. Here goes:

EPRUC IS DEAD! LONG LIVE ERP!

EPRUC is deceased. You probably didn't even notice its passing, but to many rugby people, the name had not been 'flavour of the month' for some time, so let me introduce ERP, Son of EPRUC, which hasn't exactly bounced onto the scene with much razzamatazz, either.

ERP was baptised at the armistice signing session at Castlecroft, the RFU's Youth Development Centre, when the Second Division clubs decided they were fed up with the eighteen-month battle with the RFU, and that it was time to move forward together. Because poor old EPRUC had taken a fair bit of stick, it was decided that a new name had to be found for the joint company, which had been labouring under the title of 'Newco' for some time. That's how ERP was born - or rather, selected from a variety of ideas displayed on a large blackboard at the meeting.

I think it fair to mention that the RFU President's selection of 'English Rugby Partnership Limited' coincided with the opinion of the clubs.

So ERP is now up and running. It consists of four directors from the First Division clubs, and two from the Second Division, plus two from the RFU. It's 'mission statement' includes a commitment to take all possible steps to implement a commercial operation which will bring in £1 million a year for each First Division club, and £500,000 for each club from the Second Division. It will take over control of all sponsorship and merchandising arrangements, and manage all aspects of the professional game in both Divisions. On the finance side, the two major revenue-earning sources are the sale of broadcasting rights, and the appointment of a title sponsor to the League.

Acres of newsprint have already been devoted to the Sky/RFU deal which brings in a total of £87 million over 5 years. Of this, the First and Second Division clubs will receive £22.5 million (£4.5 million a year) while the rest goes to clubs playing below those Divisions - a whacking £13 million a year, so all the rumour-monger stories of the 'Big Boys' running off with all the booty to the disadvantage of the rest of the game, are nonsense.

I felt it significant that we all signed up with the RFU at Castlecroft, where the RFU's youth development programme is initiated by Ron Tennick, and which continues to flourish with the aid of income derived from the best deal possible with Sky.

ERP has just reported to both the First and Second Division clubs on two bidders to take over the League title sponsorship from Courage next season. The winning bidder will be announced shortly, and will show a substantial increase

in income over the current arrangements.

ERP is now getting into its stride, with offices at Twickenham under Chief Executive, Kim Deshayne, and the measure of its success will partially be down to the number of other deals he brings to the table for us, but rather than bog you down with figures, the only thing a Gloucester supporter wants to know is (1) "What will Glaws get out of it all?" and (2) is it going to be enough to sustain a top-flight professional game at Kingsholm?

Answers: (1) We should get around £480,000 next season. (2) No. Hence the recent announcement that we are looking for outside investment.

Like every other club in the First Division, we shall make a loss this year, but at least we budgeted for a loss which is containable in the short term. Not only do we want to reward our top players better, but we want to bring new blood to Kingsholm, and Richard Hill's mandate from the Board is to bring forward possible signings. We can only do this if we acquire more outside investment from someone who can see a vision of Gloucester reaching the top level again, and be able to compete with the best of European clubs to gain some return on investment.

On the rugby management side of ERP, a recent consultation meeting of Chief Executive and Directors of Rugby proved very useful in finding a consensus on a range of subjects. The majority of 1st and 2nd Division clubs believed that clubs should run a First team, a Second team, a Development side (U23 or U21) and Youth team (U19), with the top two teams playing at the same locality, if not the same pitch.

Getting a properly structured season of fixtures is of paramount importance, and representations will be made to the Five Nations to get international periods into blocks, preferably getting the post-Christmas internationals closer to Christmas. There is no support for Divisional rugby at any level above the schools game. Competitions to be put into place at Youth and Development level should improve the standard of rugby at those age groups, and the stage between 1st teams and Internationals should be covered by England 'A', England U21 and other levels.

So we are back to the finance problem again. If we could end up in the top four of the Courage League, our funding from ERP would increase next year to around £750,000, due to our participation in the European Cup, but I think everyone accepts that we can only get there after next season, with some strategically-placed new talent, and that means spending more money.

Peter Arnold

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Gloucester News

How Mickey

As I was rude enough to remark earlier, the last time Gloucester met Leicester in the Cup, the Tigers came second - and that was at Twickenham. But even that homeric encounter wasn't the most famous Gloucester Cup victory ever. That accolade undoubtedly has to be awarded the the Cup Quarter Final against London Welsh, played almost exactly a quarter- century ago, on March 4th, 1972.

"London Welsh?", I hear some of the younger supporters saying. "What the hell do London Welsh have to do with anything?" To which I can only reply that times change, and in those days, there was no better team in England and Wales than the Exiles who played at the Old Deer Park. As will emerge from the following piece, prepared with the extremely co-operative assistance of Mickey Booth, in most people's opinion, the best scrum-half never to play for England.

Mick, of course, played in that epic quarter-final, so knows as well as anyone whereof he speaks. His reminiscence of the occasion is fascinating, but before we get to that, let's set the scene.

1971/2 was the very first year of the Cup. There was no sponsor, and the Competition was, somewhat clumsily, entitled "The RFU Club Knock-Out Championship Competition" which doesn't exactly trickle off the tongue, does it? Indeed, there were those among the hierarchy who regarded the whole thing as a dangerous, radical experiment with competitiveness, just about on a par with the way some people are nowadays worrying about cloning sheep. That season was one of Gloucester's best. At the time of the Cup Quarter Final, we had played 31 matches, won 22 of them, and drawn 2 of the others. However, London Welsh were undoubtedly the team of the year, being almost unbeaten, and having scored over 800 points, as indeed, was no more than one might have expected, having regard to the amount of talent they could call upon. But let Mickey Booth take it up from there.

"In the team that played us" he says, there

were eleven Internationals, and six of them were in the pack. The British Lions had just returned from beating New Zealand down under, and six of that party were in the side."

"They included, undoubtedly, the best wing-threequarter in the world, Gerald Davies, and among the backs were people like John Dawes, who had skippered the Lions, as well as London Welsh, with some other very useful performers too. We knew that if they got the ball out to Davies we were in a lot of trouble, so we decided that we weren't going to let the ball get out that far."

"Against all the Welsh talent on view, our side looked a bit shabby. Our pack had been the scourge of the country all season, but the only International we had playing was Mike Burton. Our other England player was Alan Brinn (now the Club Chairman), but he'd broken his arm in training the week before, and couldn't play, so we brought Nigel Jackson in. Also, just before the game, Dick Smith had to cry off, so we played John Haines, who wasn't a bad replacement, anyway."

"But our backs weren't that bad. Eric Stephens was at full-back, a good player, and a fine kicker of the ball. Bob Clewes, at that time, was a very promising winger, as was proved when he broke the club try-scoring record some years later. The other wing was John Dix, a small, darting type of player who always gave one hundred per-cent. Richard Jardine and John Bayliss were two very different types of centre, but both very fine centres. Tom Palmer, at that time, was England's No. 2 outside-half, and then there was myself, so it wasn't a bad line-up, but against the London Welsh backs, no one gave us much of a chance."

"So we decided to play it tight, shut them out of the game as far as possible, and at the right time, bombard their full-back, Dai Llewellyn, with high kicks, with John Bayliss coming up like an express train, and our superb back row arriving at the speed of light."

"Before the game, the changing room was like a lion's den. We had some pretty tough

Peter Arnold

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Booth Saw It

characters in our side, and they were beating their heads against the walls, punching each other on the chest, and I don't know what else."

"Our Captain was Mike Nichols. Of course, Nick was the prince of motivators - he could motivate the dead if he wanted to. He made it quite clear, right from the start, that anyone who missed a tackle would be thumbing a lift home afterwards!"

"In fact, his whole team talk was frightening. John Dix had thought this was just going to be another game of rugby, but as he listened his eyes opened wider and wider, until they nearly disappeared. But just like everyone else, when he got out on the field, he gave a hundred and ten percent."

"We played the first half up the slope, and into a strong wind, and our tactics worked just the way we hoped. Until just before half-time, my old friend Billy Hullin, the Welsh scrum-half, wriggled over for a try. Shouldn't have happened really. Two of our lads had him taped, left it to one another, and he got between them."

"Still, when the half-time whistle went, we were quite happy. Some of the cockier ones, who'd been around a bit - myself included - thought we were there. We'd done the rough digging, all the spade work, shut them out with the slope and the wind in their favour. I knew that, in the second half with the elements with us, it would take a miracle for them to beat us, four points in front or not."

"It was Mike Potter who scored the vital try. When I saw the ball bouncing about on their line, I thought 'That's it. We're going to score here'. We didn't really have much faith in 'Pot's' ball handling skills, and when I say him going for it, I thought 'Oh! No! Not 'Pot'. Somebody else get in there, quick.', but I was dead wrong. He scooped the ball up, and went over with no problem. Eric converted, which made it 9-4, and we were home and dry. And I don't mind telling you, one or two of us had tears in our eyes."

"But I was so pleased for Mike Potter. I roomed with him all through that Cup run. We'd all go down into the hotel bar on the

evening before the game, and most of us would drink about four halves, which doesn't do you much harm, when you're fit, but Mike always drank in pints. We reckoned he drank six that evening, but even if it was four, he'd still drunk twice as much as the rest of us."

"We went back to our room, and 'Pot' lay on the bed, saying 'What we going to do, Mick? There's Davies and Dawes and Evans, and John Taylor, and all these great Internationals.' I told him 'Go out there and get stuck into them. They're only human beings!' And Mike did just that."

"The great Mervyn Davies was jumping opposite Mike, and I don't suppose he was ever turned inside out like he was that day. He didn't tap the ball back, he took it with two hands ready to feed it. When his feet touched the ground, Mike Potter just threw him over his shoulder!"

"On the day we had our tactics better sorted out than they did. Gerald Davies looked a very sad man, because he hadn't touched the ball all day."

"After the game, Fred Williams, who had been propping against Burton - used to play for Bristol, actually, we called him 'Fat Fred', but he was a good old player - came up and told me that he was pleased, in a way, that we'd won. Apparently, he'd had disagreements with John Dawes during training. They'd been practicing switches and misses, and all their pretty moves, and Fred, who'd watched us give Bristol a mother and father of a hiding, said to him, 'Let's get the scrummaging machine out' 'No' said Dawes 'We don't need scrummaging!'"

"Well, Fred was right."

Following the quarter final, the rest is history. Gloucester went to Coventry for the Semi. That was a pulsating game, too about which Peter West wrote 'They don't play rugby like this in West Wittering.' It was settled by an awesome last five-minutes drop goal by Eric Stephens, from almost the half-way line and the touch-line.

Then we beat Moseley in the Twickenham Final, so whatever happens today, or in any other season - Gloucester won it first. And they can't take that away from us.



Saturday 29th March 1997 Kick-off 3.00pm

GLOUCESTER 13
Cherry & White

LEICESTER 26
Scarlet, Green & White

15	Chris Catling	T	Full Back	John Liley	O
14	Mike Peters		Right Wing	Steve Hackney	T N
13	Craig Emmerson		Centre	Will Greenwood	M
12	Martin Roberts		Centre	Stuart Potter	L
11	Mike Lloyd		Left Wing	Craig Joiner (I)	K

10	Mark Mapletoft	C 2PG	Outside Half	Joel Stransky (I)	2PG 5PG J
9	Scott Benton		Scrum Half	Austin Healey (I)	I

1	Tony Windo		Prop	Graham Rowntree (I)	A
2	Phil Greening (I)		Hooker	Richard Cockerill	B
3	Andy Deacon		Prop	Darren Garforth (I)	C
4	Rob Fidler		Lock	Martin Johnson (I)	D
5	Dave Sims *		Lock	Neil Fletcher	E
6	Pete Glanville		Flanker	John Wells	F
7	Nathan Carter		Flanker	Neil Back (I)	H
8	Simon Devereux		No.8	Eric Miller (I)	G

16	Chris Fortey		Replacements	Niall Malone (I)	P
17	Phil Vickery			Aadel Kardooni	Q
18	Andy Stanley			Dean Richards (I)	R
19	Laurie Beck			Dorian West	S
20	Martyn Kimber			Bill Drake-Lee	T
21	Don Caskie			Leon Lloyd	U

Referee
Steve Lander (RFU)

(I) International
* Captain

Touch Judges
Ashley Rowden (RFU)
Bob Jenkins (RFU)

CORNER

LIPSON'S



Wasps continue to light the way at the top of the table and have an excellent chance to go even further ahead before they take on Leicester next week with a home game against London Irish. With points difference likely to be critical Wasps have done themselves a huge favour with their comprehensive defeat of Orrell, another good win this week and their points will be as good any of the leading contenders. Bath are the only other top four team to be involved in League action either in the week or on Saturday and they will have similar hopes for their match against West. Last weeks action strengthened the big four's hold on the European places, Bristol's defeat of Sale putting the Cheshire team's

chance of Europe under severe pressure and making their own route to survival even without a play off looking a lot rosier.

It would be a real turnup if Gloucester were to win this one and yet they have nothing to lose, at home and rated as under dogs



Wasps entertain London Irish in mid week and ought to wrap this up comfortably, they will be looking for a lot of tries and Irish will have an eye on the points difference column. Wasps look on track for another win and Irish have a very difficult run in and will do well to win more than one more game. It looks a rapid return to League Two for the men in green. Bath have always struggled to overcome West at Brierton Lane but with everything still to play for in the League they should manage a win on Thursday night. The champions came good against Irish late on and West's best chance is to make the visitors sweat for their points, may not be a pretty sight but Bath for this one.

The remaining League games on Saturday give Northampton and Saracens an opportunity to gain much needed points.

Northampton play at Orrell and should break their away duck and put some daylight between them and Bristol, while Saracens can make the most of their chance against West and put pressure on Quins. Quite amazing to think that there is not one team who is in a coasting position, there is all to play from top to bottom.

The Cup pits some old rivals at Kingsholm, although Gloucester would probably prefer a wet Wednesday night with the Shed baying in the darkness! Leicester will be favourites but Gloucester have made the most of an unfancied squad and the Tigers will advance with caution. It would be a real turnup if Gloucester were to win this one and yet they have nothing to lose, at home and rated as under dogs. Leicester will have the firepower to overcome Kingsholm and the opposition team and should advance on Twickenham with at least 8 points to spare.

Prior to last weekend I fancied Sale to overcome Quins but a loss at The Memorial Ground put the skids under their League campaign and may have affected their confidence. Quins are seasoned Cup warriors and will be keen to make up for a disappointing League season (again!). Sale will make the visitors fight all the way but as in the other semi final I go for an away win. This will be tight and Sale are in with a great chance, somehow I can't see them beating the Londoners three times in a season.