

GLOUCESTER

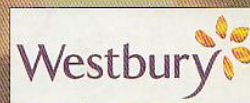
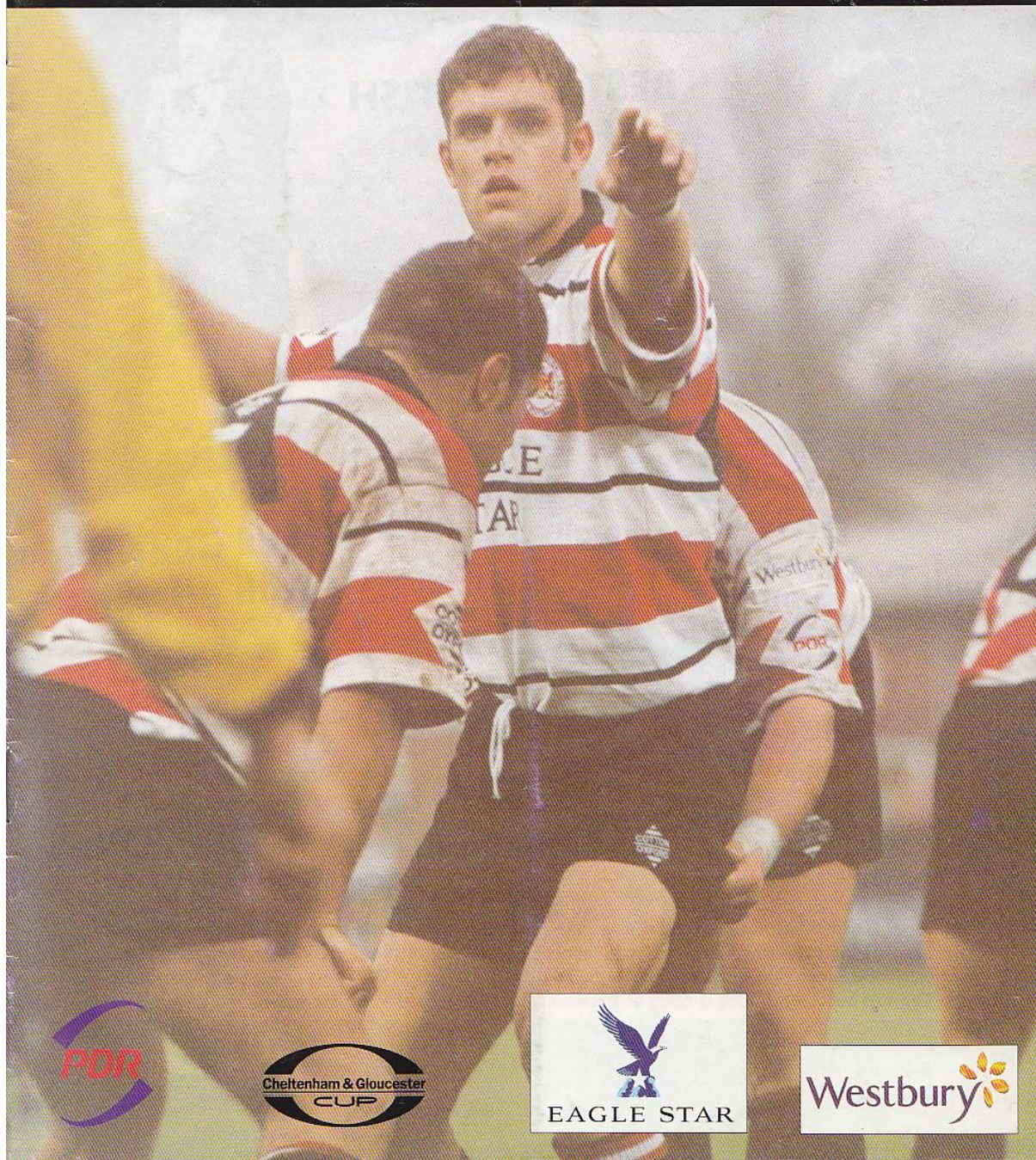
The Cherry and Whites



GLOUCESTER V FYLDE

£2.00

6th December 1997 KO 3pm Vol 2/7





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Saturday 6th December 1997 **Kick-off 12.30pm**

GLOUCESTER
Cherry & White

FYLDE
Claret, Gold & White

15	CHRIS CATLING T	Full Back	GAVIN MOFFAT	15
14	AUDLEY LUMSDEN TF	Right Wing	MARK EVANS	14
13	TERRY FANOLUA (I) FT	Centre	STUART CONNELL	13
12	RICHARD TOMBS (I)	Centre	DAVE TANNER	12
11	ROB JEWELL FF	Left Wing	IAN BIRD	11
10	MARK MAPLETOFT (I) K	Outside Half	IAN MARCLAY	10
9	SCOTT BENTON T S	Scrum Half	ROBIN SAVERIMUTTO	9
1	TONY WINDO S	Prop	RICHARD HANSON	1
2	NEIL McCARTHY T	Hooker	STEVE WILLIAMS	2
3	PETE JONES	Prop	STEVE RIGBY	3
4	ROB FIDLER S	Lock	KARL KUMBIER	4
5	MARK CORNWELL	Lock	BRIAN McCARTHY	5
6	PETE GLANVILLE* T	Flanker	RICHARD STOWE *	6
7	NATHAN CARTER	Flanker	GRAHAME TASKER	7
8	ED PEARCE S	No. 8	LIAM McCORMICK	8

18	16 IAN SANDERS ✓	Replacements	JONATHAN WEBSTER	16
17	NICK OSMAN ✓		DAMIAN AINGE	17
18	18 SIMON DEVEREUX ✓		JULIEN IRVING	18
19	19 ANDREW GIBBS ✓		JOHNNY KAY	19
20	20 CHRIS FORTEY		BRENDAN HANAVAN	20
21	21 ADEY POWLES ✓		ANDREW MACFARLANE	21
22				22

Referee
ASHLEY ROWDEN
(RFU/Berkshire)

(I) International
*** Captain**
Fourth Official

Touch Judges
P FACEY (RFU)
A REAY (RFU)

Come on Ref!



written by Keith Malcolm

"My advice to any youngster is to go back and play. The only reason I ref is because my days as fly half for Bristol Harlequins are well and truly over." Ed Morrison, the 1995 World Cup Final referee, writing in his book *"A Referee's Guide."*

Admit it! We've all done it. I mean an afternoon in The Shed wouldn't be the same without a little bit of banter with the man in the middle. You have to question his eye sight at least once during the match, it's tradition! Well England's top official Ed Morrison, from Bristol certainly thinks so:

"It's part and parcel of the game and I wouldn't have it any other way, though I would draw the line at the sort of abuse dished out to soccer referees, and I don't just mean the abuse they get from the supporters!"

Ed Morrison, a former fly half with the Western Counties league team Bristol Harlequins, is one of very few referees who's as famous as the top players. In fact he was the only Englishman who played an active part in the 1995 World Cup Final between South Africa and the All Blacks. He's in charge of around fifty matches each winter, and for the last nine years has spent the bulk

of his summers refereeing down under. But as far as he's concerned the atmosphere at Kingsholm rates alongside the very best grounds in the World: "The Gloucester crowd is totally biased and totally blinkered. but it's one of very few true rugby environments left. The supporters know their rugby, and they know how to get at the ref. But afterwards in the bar they'll buy you a pint and have a good laugh."

Despite the pressures of red and yellow cards, the sin bin and the big screen, Ed Morrison and the rest of the top class referees are still only part timers. They do get paid a fee for every game they take charge of, but that fee is light years away from the wages the top players receive. Perhaps that's why there are dozens of club matches every weekend in Gloucester that have no qualified referee in charge. In Gloucestershire the situation is critical, there are simply too few

people willing to take up the whistle and note pad and join the refereeing ranks. Roger Bacon is the Secretary of the Gloucester and District Referees Society:

"There is just so much rugby played in this area every Sunday we just can't cope. The trouble is the 40 year olds in Gloucester still want to play, and by the time they do hang up their boots most of them are too long in the tooth to start to ref."

Ed Morrison's advice to new referees is to think again, and to go back and play the game. trouble is in Gloucestershire if there aren't more people prepared to think about refereeing then there may not be enough games for everyone to play in.

Roger Bacon, Secretary of the Gloucester and District Referees Society can be contacted on 01452 741070.

X-Fylde



Peter Arnold

'X - the unknown quantity', is a pretty accurate description of Fylde. these days, at least as far as Gloucester RFC is concerned. And that's a pity. It's quite a while since we've had the pleasure of welcoming the Lytham St. Anne's side to Kingsholm, and very enjoyable their forays down here were, too.

Fylde always used to be one of the select little group of visitors who arrived at Easter. When Fylde arrived, you knew summer wasn't far away. The weather was usually good, and the fact of the Bank Holiday weekend put everyone in a good mood, so we could usually reckon on an attractive, running game, with players and the crowd conspiring to make Kingsholm the preferred place to be for a few hours.

Not that they were anyone's pushovers. In fact, there was a spell when Fylde could field a front eight which could match any pack in the country, led by the formidable figure of the peerless Bill Beaumont himself. Even when Bill wasn't actually playing, he was quite likely to turn up, for the crack, as much as anything. One such occasion came when he had announced that he would not be playing any more that season, to

prepare himself for his forthcoming challenge as England's Captain on the tour to Argentina. Yet there was Bill, happily quaffing ale in the bar, and explaining to everyone just why our own John Fidler had been selected, to the wrath of some of the pundits, for the forthcoming South American trip. "They've got some big lads out there." He told me, "And Fid's was the arm I wanted wrapped round me !"

So we knew, even though the press had dubbed John as the fourth lock in the party, condemned to slave in the 'Dirt Trackers' for a few weeks, that the scene wasn't really like that. Sure enough, Fid played in the two Tests, and retained his place in the England side when he came home.

Ironical, isn't it ? The wheel so nearly came full circle last summer, when John's son, Rob, came so agonisingly close to a place on the 1997 Argentine tour. Still - he certainly made his point against the All Blacks the other Tuesday, didn't he ? And I'll bet Bill Beaumont had a reminiscent chuckle about that. Bill is undoubtedly Fylde's most affectionately remembered International, with 34-England Caps and seven Lions appearances, but today's

welcome visitors have always had some pretty fair performers in their ranks. Some of us remember Malcolm Phillips, who had 25 Caps of his own. Opponents of the League system point out that teams like Fylde really have little realistic chance of climbing into the upper strata of the game when they are condemned to playing sides no better than they are all season. "How can they improve without appropriate experience ?", they query. We could argue about that, but my own feeling is that this isn't so much an argument against Leagues as for competitions like the new Cheltenham and Gloucester Cup, and even the European Conference. At least Fylde will be measuring themselves against Gloucester and Northampton this season.

This is one reason why we are so pleased to welcome Fylde to Kingsholm today. The other is that it's always good to see old friends again after a lapse of years. If Richard Mogg is here today, I'm sure he'd agree. He scored a hat trick one Easter, I remember.

A warm Kingsholm welcome to everyone who has made the trip today. Hope you have a thoroughly enjoyable time with us.



Making the point again

Peter Arnold

One of the interesting, and sometimes irritating, things about this job is the frequency with which news breaks during the actual production of the programme. Such is the case today, but there's nothing in the least annoying about it.

Since penning the above piece congratulating Dave Sims, Rob Fidler and Phil Vickery on their enormous contribution to the ERP Partnership side's display against New Zealand, We've learned that all three did indeed retain

their places for the England 'A' game at Leicester, against the same opposition. What's more, we had a huge bonus. Scott Benton was picked to start at No. 9, and when you think how many good scrum-halves there are knocking on Clive Woodward's door at the moment, that's a highly commendable achievement. But it didn't stop there. Mark Mapletoft and Kevin McCarthy were named on the benches, and it seems unlikely that they weren't scheduled to get a run out at some stage in the game. We sincerely

congratulate all six of the Gloucester lads on their selection, but there isn't much point in wishing them luck, because all will be done and dusted by the time you read this, and we'll all know just how they got on.

Not the least gratifying thing about the situation is that it does seem to imply that 'Scotty' and 'Tofty' are now fit again. Now if Phil Greening could just sort his injuries out...

Well done all of you. We hope it's just the start of many good things for you.

Coach to Newcastle

Next Sunday, as ever was, we have the formidable task of taking on Newcastle on their own patch. It's a Premiership game, of course, so a win would be a consummation devoutly to be wished. The Club is perfectly willing to run a coach to the event, but at the moment there are very few takers, partly I suspect, because we haven't had much in the way of home games, lately, so there hasn't quite been the incentive to sign up. If the coach does run, it will

cost £12.00 and will leave Kingsholm at 9.00am, which is as unconscionably early hour for a December Sunday. If you'd like to go, drop into the office. While on the subject, I'm informed that our scheduled visit to Bath on December 20th has been put back until February, so there's no point in planning a safari down to the Rec on the day. I assume that the reason for the postponement has to do with the European Semis being played on that day.

The choice of February for the postponed game is interesting. If all goes well, we could have to face Leicester, Wakefield, Northampton, a Cheltenham and Gloucester Cup Quarter Final, a Tetley Cup Quarter Final and Bath, all in 28 days. It's a busy schedule for the lads.

But I suppose that's what you get for being professional.

'Tis the Season to be jolly

December 6th seems a little early to start celebrating the Festive Season, but as this is the last programme I shall have the pleasure of presenting before Christmas Day, we'd better do something about it. This season is so disjointed it's almost surreal, but in any event, we would probably not have had the sort of Kingsholm Christmas we used to enjoy. Indeed, the idea of having fun at this time of year goes back a very long way. Around the turn of the Century, for example, the Club used to organise 'Comic Football Matches', which seem to have involved a lot of running around in eccentric forms of fancy dress. I even

found a reference, somewhere, to a midwinter cricket match. More recently, of course, the annual Boxing Day game versus Old Merchant Tailors, who at one time were a genuine power in the land, and could sometimes field International players, was a highlight of the Kingsholm season. This was superseded by a yearly visit from Lydney, and I well remember one Christmas when we played Plymouth on Christmas Eve and Lydney on Boxing Day. This can't have done anything at all for the players' consumption of Christmas pud. Those days have gone, of course, but

we have been able to provide one spot of Christmas cheer for you. Let's face it - you can't get much more traditional than the Salvation Army Band playing carols, can you?

It's a great pleasure to see them here today, although I suspect that you'll notice a few familiar faces among the instrumentalists. Several of them are regular Kingsholm Faithful, quite apart from their allegiance to the good old 'Sally Army'.

We thank them all for their time. Wouldn't it be rather nice to see them a little more often?

Player Profile

Peter Arnold



Nick Osman

In the welter of big-name signings over the close season, the name 'Nick Osman' probably slipped by unregarded by most people. We should have known better. Any players who comes to us from Newbury with the blessings of our own, very shrewd rugby brain, Keith Richardson, should not be taken lightly.

Even after the season started, with Mark Mapletoft giving us his impression of a firefly, twinkling all over the field, we did tend to forget young Nick. Which wasn't fair, because he was quietly doing the business with the United, and impressing some good judges in the process.

His chance came during the European Conference games, where he slotted into the side with the greatest of aplomb, and took to the First XV outside half spot as if he'd been a long-serving veteran, rather than an aspiring 24 year-old. Since then, 'Tofty's' persistent injury has given Nick an extended run, and he's certainly not let anyone down.

The first time I saw him, when he came on for the last few minutes of the London Irish game, I experienced a decided

sense of *deja vu*.. Couldn't think why, and then the light dawned. He was reminding me of Chris Williams, the RAF man who played for Gloucester and Gloucestershire, and had one Cap for England, where he made the first decent break an England outside-half had made for two or three seasons.

At 6'2" and 94kg, Nick Osman has the same size and physique, and gives the same impression of having time to set about his business. Perhaps he's a little quicker off the mark than Chris, but you can judge that as well as I.

Nick was born and educated in Southampton, before going on to Loughborough, and you can't have a much better pedigree than that. At home in Southampton he played for the Trojans club. He also turned out for Loughborough Students. He played for Hampshire at U15 and senior level, and had a spell across the Atlantic where he appeared for Beacon Hill, which is a Boston side.

England 'B' had the advantage of his services at both U16 and U18 levels, as did the British Universities side. He's also appeared for the South and South West.

Nick was, of course, a vital component of John Richardson's all-conquering Newbury side last season, and he still regards gaining promotion with them without losing a match as the most pleasurable thing that has happened to him so far, rugbywise. Incidentally, he rates his worst experience as losing, with Loughborough, to Brunel in the Universities Final.

He likes everything about Gloucester RFC, or at least, can't think of a single best thing about it. Strangely, he rates the worst thing about the club is Mark Cornwell, and I'm not even going to enquire about that. At the beginning of the season, his sole ambition was to gain a regular place in the First XV, and also to help Gloucester get into Europe. His most admired player is Carlos Spencer, which shouldn't surprise anyone.

Good judges are foreseeing a good future for Nick Osman, and I see no reason to disagree. After all, there aren't too many England qualified outside-halves in the Premiership, are there?

P. S. 'Where are they now?' spot

Young Nick isn't the first Osman to play for Gloucester, of course. Back in the 60's we had a strong, bustling winger called Tony Osman. He was a fair hitter

of a cricket ball, and knew a bit about Karate, too. Nowadays, Tony is a distinguished, even celebrated glass blower out Cashes Green way

somewhere. His daughter is a keen cherry-and-white fan, and was at Bath University the last time I heard of her.

Tailpiece

It's been a very odd season, so far, and doesn't look like getting much better for a month or so. After Christmas, with Richmond and London Welsh in the Cup

in quick succession, things may look up a little for Kingsholm Regulars. To all of whom I send my personal seasonal wishes, with thanks to everyone

who has written, Emailed phoned or faxed me on a whole variety of subjects. Some of them are even talking to me.