THE CHELTENHAM & GLOUCESTER CUP FINAL 1997/98

BEDFORD v GLOUCESTER

FRANKLIN'S GARDENS
NORTHAMPTON
FRIDAY, APRIL 3
KICK OFF: 8PM

OFFICIAL PROGRAMME
Cup Final Squads

Bedford

15 MIKE RAYER
14 Ben Whetstone
13 JUNIOR PARAMORE
12 Mick Pechey
11 RORY UNDERWOOD
10 PAUL TURNER
 9 Simon Crabb
 1 Neal Hatley
 2 Jimmy Richards
 3 Clem Boyd
 4 SCOTT MURRAY
 5 Shaun Plattford
 6 Roy Winters
 7 Jason Forster
 8 RUDI STRAEULI

Replacements
16 Simon Brading
17 Richard Stone
18 Aaron Davis
19 Justyn Cullen
20 David Hinkins
21 Matt Deans

Gloucester

15 Audley Lui
14 Rob Jewell
13 TERRY FANOLUA
12 RICHARD TOMBS
11 PHILIPPE SAINT-ANDRE
10 MARK MAPLETOFT
 9 Laurie Beck
 1 Trevor Woodman
 2 Neil McCarthy
 3 Andy Deacon
 4 Richard Ward
 5 Dave Sims
 6 Simon Devereux
 7 Pete Glanville (capt)
 8 STEVE OJOMOH

Replacements
16 Ian Sanders
17 Martyn Kimber
18 Pete Jones
19 Chris Fortey
20 Andrew Gibbs
21 Andrew Hazell

CAPITALS denotes Full International

REFEREE:
BRIAN CAMPSALL (Yorkshire)
TOUCH JUDGES: Chris Rees (London), Robin Goodlife (Yorkshire)
Skill, commitment and professionalism

We are delighted that the first ever Cheltenham & Gloucester Cup has been such a success – and that it has enabled C&G to be associated with the skill, commitment and professionalism which all the competing teams have shown.

Of course, the players we will be watching this evening have been particularly impressive. Bedford and Gloucester have both played some excellent rugby to reach the final.

Whatever wins here tonight, we believe that the Cheltenham & Gloucester Cup has already proved to be a winner. It has given fans across the country the opportunity to watch some top-class rugby matches, provided a challenging tournament for the clubs involved, and allowed us the chance to offer our support to one of the nation’s best-loved sports.

I’m sure tonight’s match will be thrilling for everybody – and we wish the best of luck to both sides competing today. Enjoy the game!

ROGER BURDEN
Managing Director, Cheltenham & Gloucester

Club rugby at its best

Welcome to the inaugural Cheltenham & Gloucester Cup final. We look forward to another invigorating example of club rugby at its best.

Bedford, unbeaten in the Allied Dunbar Premiership Two, have accounted for three first division scalps on their way to this evening’s final.

Gloucester came through particularly difficult quarter and semi final ties, scoring some superb tries in the process.

On behalf of the English Rugby Partnership, I would like to wish both teams and their supporters the very best of luck. I would also like to thank our hosts this evening, Northampton RFC, our sponsors Cheltenham & Gloucester; all those who have been involved in the administration of the competition this season; Rugby Express who have provided some excellent TV coverage throughout the season which will be continued this coming Sunday; and finally all those supporters of club rugby, who have shouted for their teams at the 43 matches in the competition which reaches its climax tonight.

DOUG ASH
Chief Executive English First Division Rugby Ltd

CHELTENHAM & GLOUCESTER CUP FINAL 1997/98
Gloucester

Laurel Beck
Position: Scrum Half
Born: Cheltenham, 2nd January 1971
Physique: 5' 10" 1st
Gloucester Debut: March 1990 vs Cardiff
Representative Honours: England U21, South West U21.
Former Clubs: Cheltenham Academy

Andrew Gibbs
Position: Lock
Born: Hamilton (A12), 20th August 1973
Physique: 6' 4" 1st
Gloucester Debut: 1991
Representative Honours:
New Zealand U23, U19
Former Clubs: Northland, Wanganui

Bob Jewell
Position: Wing
Physique: 6' 7" 1st
Gloucester Debut: December 1997 vs Edinburgh
Representative Honours: England U21
Former Clubs: Gordon

Lane
Amazing prospect. Scoring 3 tries in the cup match against London Welsh brought him to public notice. Almost guarantee a bright future if he continues to improve at the present rate.

Pete Glaister
Position: Flanker
Born: Gloucester, 10th June 1971
Physique: 5' 10" 1st
Gloucester Debut: 1992 vs Northampton
Representative Honours:
South West, Gloucestershire
Former Clubs: Loughborough

Mark Mapletoft
Position: Fly Half
Born: Wimborne, 20th December 1971
Physique: 5' 7" 1st
Representative Honours:
England A, U21, U18, Ban.
Former Clubs: Rugby Blues

The small but perfectly formed Mapletoft has made the fly-half position his own. Brakes the English insurgents club scored for the longest time to 1300 points at the Cheltenham & Gloucester Cup semi-final vs Edinburgh two weeks ago - his 8th match for Gloucester.

Sevens
Former Clubs: Abercrombie

Terry Farnum
Position: Centre
Born: Western Samoa
Physique: 6' 1st
Gloucester Debut: August 1966 vs Bayleys Blunders
Representative Honours: Western Samoa (77)

Terry Sunnada
Position: Wing/Full Back
Born: London, 8th June 1967
Physique: Gloucester Debut: 1996
Representative Honours:
Former Clubs: Civic

Mark Mapletoft (below) in action against Saracens

Chris Forder
Position: Hooker
Born: Gloucester, 23rd August 1971
Physique: 5' 11" 1st
Gloucester Debut: Representative Honours:
South West U21
Former Clubs: Walders

Old Boys, Gordon League
Gloucester

Who’s Who

Neil McCarthy
Position: Hooker
Born: Dublin, 26th
Reverend 1974
Physique: 5’11” 15st 7lbs
Gloucester Debut: August 1972 vs. Beige Bordeaux
Representative Honours: Exeter, England
Career Clubs: Newcastle, Bath

Steve Ojomoh
Position: Back row
Born: Enugu, Nigeria, 25th May 1970
Physique: 5’11” 16st 5lbs
Gloucester Debut: 17th January 1993 vs. Wigan
Representative Honours: England U19, U22, Senior Tour, South West
Career Clubs: Plymouth, Bath

Philippe Saint-Aubert
Position: Wing
Born: Reims, France, 9th
April 1977
Physique: 5’10” 13st 11lbs
Gloucester Debut: 17th August 1997
Representative Honours: France U19, U22, France
Career Clubs: Montpellier, Biarritz

Ian Saunders
Position: Centre 110f
Born: Pershore, 22nd
January 1973
Physique: 5’9” 16st
Gloucester Debut: August 1987 vs. Beige Bordeaux
Representative Honours: England U21, South West, Cornwall
Career Clubs: Bath

Dave Sims
Position: Lock
Born: Gloucester, 22nd
November 1966
Physique: 6’6” 16st
Gloucester Debut: 1985 vs. Beige Bordeaux
Representative Honours: England U21, D2, South West
Career Clubs: Longlevens

Colley
Club captain before Pete Glamolli. Mark the headlines when he turned out to sue Norman's son, John, after his 500th goal. With more than 200 appearances, he played more times for the club than any other current player.

Richard Toms
Position: Centre
Born: Telford (WV), 4th
January 1968
Physique: 5’11” 16st 7lbs
Gloucester Debut: August 1987 vs. Beige Bordeaux
Representative Honours: England U21, Cardiff, Exeter
Career Clubs: Plymouth, Bath

Richard Ward
Position: Lock
Born: Wrexham (Wales), 24th November 1970
Physique: 5’11” 16st
Gloucester Debut: August 1998
Representative Honours: England U21, South West
Career Clubs: Exeter, Bath

Trevor Woodman
Position: Loose Head Tigh
Born: Cornwall, 4th
August 1976
Physique: 5’11” 16st 7lbs
Gloucester Debut: August 1986
Representative Honours: England U21, Cardiff
Career Clubs: Plymouth, Bath

On the run... Simon Devereux
It's great to be in a cup final again after 23 years in the wilderness. One of the finest moments in the history of the Bedford club came in 1975 when the team won the knock-out cup at Twickenham. That was a long time ago and some of the present team were not even born at that time but tonight the 1998 Bedford vintage have a great opportunity to win another trophy.

Although our priority this season has always been to gain promotion to the top flight of English rugby, this League Cup competition has been invaluable in providing meaningful fixtures on international weekends when many clubs have had to release players to represent their countries.

Our thanks are due to the sponsors, Cheltenham & Gloucester Building Society for so effectively enabling us to fill an awkward void in the season's fixtures. The downside of course has been that many of the teams have not been at full strength for the League Cup matches due to international calls and tonight is no exception.

It might have been better if the game had been played on Sunday afternoon when those players involved with their nation's 'A' or Under-21 teams might have been available.

I know that the Bedford players on international duty are disappointed at missing the chance to play tonight even though they are thrilled to be representing their country and I am sure the same is true for the Gloucester absentees.

Nevertheless, as one door closes another opens and it is a good opportunity for some squad members to show what they can do on a big occasion and Franklin's Gardens will present a fine stage for their efforts.

Our opponents, Gloucester, are one of the great English rugby clubs. The Bedford players were suitably delighted to go to the daunting Kingsholm ground a few weeks ago and come away with an outstanding win under their belts, only the second team to succeed there this season.

That is history, of course, but Gloucester will not have forgotten. West country pride was wounded that day and a backlash is inevitable. Fortunately, this Bedford team is made of stern stuff and even though we are deprived of key players by injuries and international calls we have a winning momentum to sustain us when the Cherry and Whips build up the pressure.

We have enjoyed a tremendous season and the players have earned their promotion to the Premier Division where we shall be meeting sides of Gloucester's calibre on a regular basis.

Victory tonight would be icing on the cake, and make no mistake about it, we want to win! There is no point reaching a cup final to come second. Whatever happens, I hope both teams get some satisfaction from the encounter and that the loyal followers of two great clubs thoroughly enjoy the occasion. A fast, furious and skilful contest will again demonstrate to the blinkered power-brokers at Twickenham hierarchy that thousands of people do care about club rugby and that the clubs are the foundation stones upon which a successful national team and a great game is built.

By GEOFF COOKE
Bedford
Chief Executive

FOR THE THIRD YEAR
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Hill over the first hurdle

It's a funny old world! The most hated team to all habitues of Gloucester's legendary covered terrace, The Shed, is Bath. So what happens? The club recruits the former Bath and England scrum half, Richard Hill, as their director of coaching.

Not a murmur from The Shed ... a few raised eyebrows, maybe; but not a peep. Hilly was never the 'London' type of scrum half. Just the opposite — he was one of those 'let's get stuck in, lads' not afraid to get his knees dirty — types that epitomise West Country rugby.

It took about five minutes for Hill to become accepted by Gloucestrians whose rugby club appeared to be headed downwards: shrewd move by 'the committee'. Hill was, back then, Gloucester's 'get out of jail free' card.

The club survived the fears of the dreaded 'R' word — relegation.

Slowly, Hill has developed a team that is cosmopolitan, yet 'local'. A handful of signings of players with international pedigree has been only part of The Plan. Young and virtually unheard of players were brought into the club — players like scrum half Scott Bentley and fullback Chris Gatting, who, along with home-grown forwards like Rob Fluker, Dave Sims and Phil Greening, are knocking on Clive Woodward's door.

Hill collected 29 England caps between 1984 and 1991 and was part of the 1991 'Grand Slam' team. He also captained England.

Add to his international credentials the eight Cup winners medals and five League championship with Bath, and you have, arguably, the best modern-day player-turned-coach at the top end of the English game.

He is brutally honest. Take that occasion in August 1996 when he selected what amounted to a 'second team' for Gloucester's league opener against Harlequins at The Stoop. He publicly admitted his faux pas and even the unforgiving Press forgave him!

The arrival of F1 team owner Tom Walkinshaw a year ago came at the same time as the signing of the only really 'high profile' player on Gloucester's books — the then French captain and winger Philippe Saint-Andre.

There were two later signings, both with international credentials. Only the most dedicated of English rugby fans had heard of Richard Tombs and Terry Fanolua before the start of this season. But since their Kingsholm arrival, Gloucester, with Morceau Saint-Andre, suddenly has a three-quarters line that is not 'there for decoration'! Today, the names of Tombs and Fanolua are well-known wherever Premiership rugby is played and beyond. Fanolua has the enviable Cheltenham & Gloucester Cup record of played 2, tries 6 — a hat-trick in both matches (v Fylde and Leicester)!

But don't believe that Gloucester can only produce home-grown forwards. Winger Rob Jewell is still colt-qualified — last week he was part of the England Colts team that beat Argentina. A Gloucestershire lad, Jewell has played in eight of Gloucester's matches this season (four Premiership appearances, two in the Tetley's Bitter Cup and two in the Cheltenham & Gloucester Cup) and has scored five tries. Not bad for a colt at the senior end of the man's game.

CHELTENHAM & GLOUCESTER CUP FINAL 1997/98
Holm from holm for the Sheddies!

By G.L. Oster

The inaugural season saw Gloucester finishing top of the pile with a sprinkling of Witley Tens (Gloucester was the first name on the scoreboard) causing quite a stir amongst the London writers who had forgotten that they had been accusing Gloucester of playing tennis rugby for a million years.

Gloucester appears to be going to the top of the list for the Sheddies' next season. The Sheddies have been looking for a new home since their original home of Kingsholm was taken over by the railway company. Gloucester has been their temporary home, but now they are looking for a new permanent home. The Sheddies have been hosting matches at Kingsholm, but they are looking for a permanent home.

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What awaits the Sheddies – some of Bedford's long standing supporters

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The 54-match series between Bedford and Gloucester started in 1903/04 at Kingsholm, when Gloucester won the first encounter 32-5, the second biggest winning margin in the series to date. Alas, Bedford was not too impressed with the scoreline and the two clubs did not meet for some 30 years!

The second match, again at Kingsholm, was in the 1936/37 season when Bedford prevailed 9-6. A year later Gloucester travelled to Bedford and in another close game came out on top 9-5.

It was in 1995/96 that the biggest winning margin was recorded. Gloucester bettered the margin of the opening games of the series 90 years previously by just one point, beating the Blues 63-15 at Kingsholm.

The following season, it was pay-back time! At Goldington Road, Bedford beat the Cherry and Whites 58-10 for the third highest winning margin in the series and the most points the Blues have scored against Gloucester.

Of the 54 matches so far played between the two clubs, Gloucester has won 31 and Bedford have prevailed in 19. Four have been drawn.

The two clubs have never met each other in either the RFU KO Cup (Tecley’s Bitter Cup) or the league. So we are in new territory this evening — the climax of a new competition and the first meeting between Bedford and Gloucester in real action!

Pictured: Bedford’s dynamic management duo of Paul Turner and Geoff Cooke (above), and Gloucester’s former French skipper, Philippe Saint-Andre.