

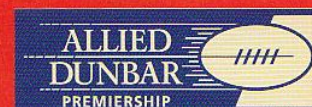
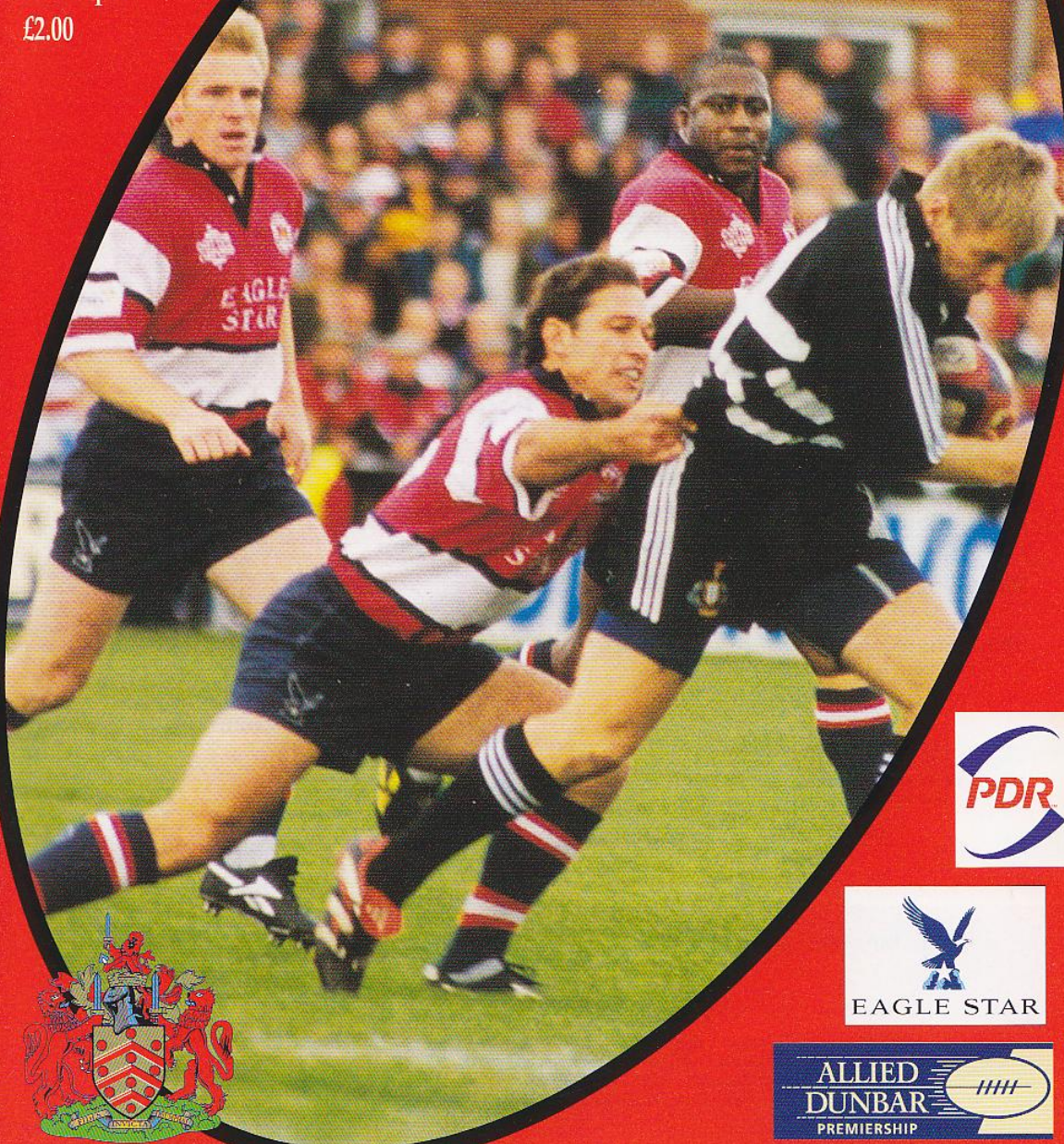
# Gloucester

v BEDFORD

7th November 1998

ko 3.00pm

£2.00





# Audley's Match Diary

## Northampton v. Gloucester, 31 October 1998

**A**fter last season and the C&G cup final followed by our away win late in the season we were all looking forward to this trip, and hoping that it would be a little less demanding.

A few changes had been made to the side, notably Scotty's return; Jeweller replaced our charismatic Frenchman while Devs and Tofty were back on bench duty. Simmo was also missing. He joined the bench with Tombsy taking over as skipper.

3 p.m. arrived but, as has become customary, the Bath-based boys were less than punctilious. However, this failed to worry most of us who were still coming to terms with the first obvious error made on the trip: somehow the coach company had sent the 'executive' bus. It had tables between all the seats, which looked and felt like leather. What luxury! But will it last? Consequently, as a team raised on slightly more spartan transport, we took some time to adapt to these slightly more salubrious surroundings.

As is usual on away trips to the Saints, Milner, sorry, John, was planning a route with the driver. In theory, this would allow him time to get off the coach close to his own front gate and to spend some quality

time at home. In the meantime, the coach would continue on its circuitous route and arrive about an hour later outside John's back gate where he could get back on! Hence, a trip which according to the AA should take a couple of hours actually took far longer.

In John's defence, the M5 was apparently closed. However, the traffic was moving quite briskly when we crossed it near Tewkesbury.

The usual coach trip activities began: Tombsy, 40 and co. played their usual game of cribbage. Ojo and The Chief played another round of their epic backgammon contest. This was watched avidly by Reg and Tofty, both of whom were being lined up as future opponents. Others chatted, perused the papers or spent the time solving lateral thinking posers set by Simon 'Madnnix'. Deacs, for one, found these highly amusing. As is the norm, I contented myself with the Telegraph crossword, which this time proved difficult to complete. With all this going on, it seemed like we arrived in no time.

We were staying at that oasis of hotels, the Northampton Stakis. This is one of the better hotels we stay in. It has large double rooms with the luxury of two large beds, giving the 6'5"-plus brigade the option of sleeping diagonally and thus keeping their feet under the covers. Rooms



were allocated, keys distributed and we retired for a brief sojourn before meeting for our evening meal. This all proved to be quite uneventful until one of the waitresses raised our spirits. The prospect of serving a table of professional sportsmen excited her to the extent that she lost control and spilled four pints of blackcurrant all over Ojo. She then spent the next hour or so running around crimson-faced and apologising at every opportunity.

The evening was similarly mundane bar a friendly card game. This saw new recruits Dawling and Jones - assisted by Tezza - make sizeable donations to the Sanders/Ojomoh retirement funds and a cash payment to Pasty.

I slept well after being melodically snored to sleep by my room-mate Ojomoh and rose early to read the papers before considering breakfast. All seemed well as the team passed the time prior to our team meeting.

We arrived at the ground trying to ignore the incessant rain that had been falling all morning. I tried to convince myself that it was warm and dry but as you can guess, this proved difficult.

Spirits were high before the game: preparations had gone well, and we all expected to win. As you know, however, things went against us. That's all I wish to say about that except that I hope we do better next year!

Audley Lumsden





# From the Team Manager

Hopefully by the time 3 o'clock comes on Saturday the rain will have stopped and the sun will be shining. I know this will make one member of the staff here at Gloucester very happy. Dave Balmer our groundsman has been pulling his hair out over the last few weeks due to the excessive amount of rain but I am sure Dave (as usual) will have prepared a super pitch for the match today.

When talking about Dave, I would like to mention how everybody including the management and supporters must be very pleased with the way in which he prepares the pitch. I must admit that there are times during the week when I am frightened to walk on it. Carry on the good work Dave – you are doing a superb job!

I would like this afternoon to welcome Bedford to Kingsholm for what I am sure will be a very exciting and hard contest. This is Bedford's first year in the Allied Dunbar Premiership after gaining promotion from the second division last season. Their playing record in the second division needs no explaining. I would also like to mention and welcome Geoff Cooke to Kingsholm this afternoon. Everyone knows that he is the ex-

England Team Manager and what Geoff does not know about rugby is not worth knowing.

Looking at the playing record of Bedford this season they are obviously like all members of the first division finding the competition very hard. Knowing Bedford as I do they are a team who will play for 80 minutes and never give up.

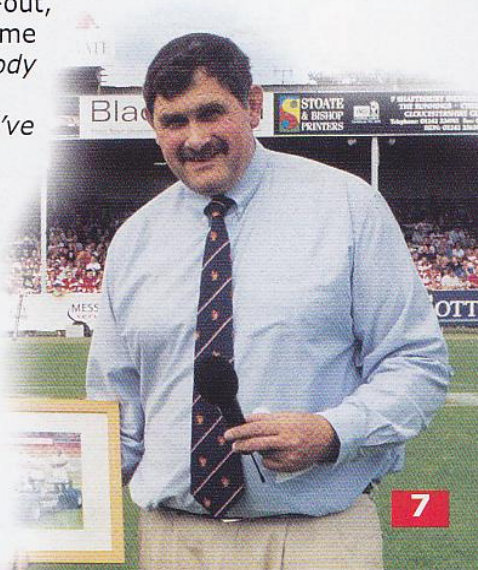
One of my fond memories of Bedford is playing away against Bedford for Gloucester United. My partner in the second row that day was John Brain, the front row was Gordon Sergeant, Kevin White and Phil Blakeway and for some unknown reason the Gloucester front row was in a bit of bother. I heard the call come "put one through" and the request was carried out. The pack got up and jogged to the next line-out, John Brain came up to me and said "Fids its a bloody good job you are not a police marksman – you've just laid Kevin White out".

It was disappointing last Saturday against Northampton a game played in atrocious weather conditions but it shows that the players have to be very well disciplined

and not be sent to the sin bin. A player being sent off in games which are so close can cost you the match.

After reading various articles after the London Scottish game, I was under no illusions. Although we did not play particularly well, London Scottish are becoming a very good side. Their selection has been consistent and they are now adjusting to the pace of the first division. It was no surprise to me when they beat Bath at home.

I hope you all enjoy your afternoon for what I am sure will be an exciting game. After what happened against Bedford in a friendly last season I am sure that the boys have a point to prove this afternoon.





*Dave Barton gives*

## A PROFESSIONAL VIEW

"Players pushing a fourth official? It never used to happen in my day. Come to think of it, we never had a second or third, never mind a fourth official!"

Reminiscing isn't what it used to be, but the above observation is true and rugby players' respect for officialdom seems to be on the wane by the same degree as the stakes are increasing.

In the past three weeks, we have seen Victor Ubogu's dismissal at Cardiff for alleged dissent by referee Alun (cor!) Ware and Mick Watson fined after pushing past Gloucester and Society's Andy Malpas on the way to the sin bin at Kingsholm.

In his defence, Ubogu was frustrated by Ware, who had never refereed a Welsh premier league game, let alone one with all the emotional baggage of Bath v. Cardiff in front of 12000 fans.

Two-and-a-half years ago, Neil Back was banned for six months after pushing Steve Lander over at the end of Leicester's Pilkington Cup

final defeat by Bath, even though the Tiger claimed he had mistaken the referee for Andy Robinson.

But Mike Burton, who found himself on the wrong side of the referee as well as the ball during his career, said: "It's only when we see a referee pushed that we go beserk. We have got to be careful that we don't go down football's route, where players use bad language and are abusive to referees as a matter of course.

"I was sent off four times and each time I turned and walked away. I never said 'thank you' mind, but I didn't stand there arguing about it. When I spoke to the referee I called him 'sir' and you would certainly never lay your hands on him.

"The clubs have a responsibility here. As part of their training, players should learn how to treat referees and accept decisions. There shouldn't be an ongoing dialogue between the players and the referee. The captain should have the right to query decisions, but not the whole team."

Clive Norling, now the Welsh Rugby Union's Director of Referees, said: "In Wales, we have brought in a code of conduct and the players are expected to accept the referee's decision without question."

The 48-year old once famously told Robinson, "British Lion or not sonny, keep talking and you're off the field!" but forgot he was microphoned up for Rugby Special! He added "People have always had words to say to referees. But one advantage rugby has got is the 10-yard law. Now we have got the sin-bin and they can go and talk to themselves for 10 minutes!

"At 6'4" and 16 stone, no-one ever pushed me but these incidents are isolated anyway. It's not a regular occurrence because people know that if you assault a referee you can kiss your rugby career goodbye. That has maintained the peace over the years."

It may be a fragile peace, but let's hope it stays that way!



# BEDFORD ARE BACK!

*Peter Arnold*

**B**y this time last season it had already become obvious that today's game was going to take place. After decades in the doldrums, Bedford, once one of England's most feared and respected traditional clubs was back in the reckoning, enthusiastically smashing all Premiership Two opposition into the middle distance, and obviously having a great time doing it.

It was a far cry from the days of such distinguished performers as Budge Rogers, who won 34 England Caps and served a long term as Chairman of Selectors, but very welcome, nevertheless.

Many of us, those who have been students of the game since childhood, were very pleased to see the renaissance. It's always sad to see such a fine old institution as Bedford drop off the bottom, so to speak, and it was nice to see such respected old opponents begin to claw their

way back up the ladder even before the arrival of the professional game. To be sure, the modern era gave the club an enormous fillip, but the long, hard climb back to the top was well under way before that, as our own John Brain and Richard Pascall have reason to remember. Indeed, the emergence of 'Pasc' on the Kingsholm scene is one of the things we have to thank today's opponents for.

I wonder if Richard's here today? He probably is, presiding over events in the Chelsea Building Society box as usual, and if so, must be having a wry grin to himself at the contrast between today's Bedford and the strugglers he used to represent.

The recent history of Bedford must be an enormous encouragement to such aspiring clubs as Worcester and Rotherham. If they can reach the top flight, then there seems very little reason, purely on the playing

front anyway, why other fire-in-the-belly clubs can't do the same. Just so long as the game's tangled politics don't get in the way, that is.

Of course, this isn't the first time we have met lately. It was Bedford who stood in our way in the Final of the inaugural Cheltenham and Gloucester Cup last season. Gloucester won that one, but it was obvious that a new force to be reckoned with had arrived.

As for today's game - well, anybody's guess, really. We've had a fairly traumatic couple of weeks, one way and another, although the results haven't been nearly as bad as some of the disgruntled doomsayers who have been fulminating in the Citizen would have you believe. It was always so. Some of our supporters have always been in the habit of greeting a loss as if it heralded the imminent closure of the club and the collapse of Western civilisation, while the news of a 50-point win would provoke the comment "Ought to have been 100."

Bedford could have wished for one or two more wins, too. Last weekend, however, the class began to show through. They came within a score of beating a classy Richmond team in a game which was variously described in the press as 'thrilling', 'enthalling', and 'pulsating'.

Both sides have points to prove today, and we should be in for an intriguing afternoon. Welcome back, Bedford. You've been away too long.





# Lesson to be learned?

**D**id you notice that Newcastle have moved back to their old Kingston Park ground after a few games flirting with the massive Gateshead Stadium?

Apparently they have been averaging gates of around 4,000, and that doesn't go anywhere near justifying the investment in such a large venue.

One can see the original thinking. Gateshead was packed for games against Bath and Leicester towards the end of last season. Why not take advantage of the large audience indicated on those occasions?

The flaw in that reasoning is fairly obvious - at least, it is with hindsight. People who will trot along to a side that was beating everyone, and in the end won the Championship, won't necessarily fork out the gate money to watch ordinary, bog standard Premiership games. Here at Kingsholm we might deplore that attitude, but it exists nevertheless.

What really did interest me was the statement from the

club's management which noted that anticipated huge audiences hadn't materialised, and that the same was true all over the country. Apparently, investors in the game had eagerly expected that a large, rugby-watching section of the population - perhaps

analogous to that which watches first-class soccer - exists and is willing to attend games on a regular basis, if only facilities are improved and the marketing is upgraded. This, on present evidence, does not appear to be so. But I think we could have told them that.

From our point of view, there are two things to be learned from the Newcastle experience. One is that nothing fills grounds like a winning side. That means points in the league table, and consistent success away as well as at home.

The other is that we should all get down on our benders and give thanks that we have Kingsholm to come to, and that the Club management has no intention of listening to the siren voices advocating a much bigger ground somewhere else.

We've all seen it. Even Sky can't disguise the sight of two good teams doing battle in a big, cavernous stadium with more empty spaces than full ones. The complete lack of atmosphere on those occasions can't help the players who are trying to put in an attractive, committed performance week after week. After all, these chaps put their bodies and physical well-being on the line for our entertainment, and why should they risk serious injury for the sake of a small nucleus of supporters who are rattling around like two peas in a pod?

I wouldn't be a bit surprised to see Newcastle's season come to life once they're back in a ground where their supporters are closer to them, and cheering them on more effectively than they can in a vast, echoing, comparatively empty stadium. I wonder how long it will be until a few other clubs, which we could all name, learn the lesson and follow Newcastle back to their roots?

We, of course, never abandoned ours. Thank the Lord for Kingsholm!



## THANK YOU MR ROSENIOR

I'm no soccer man, but I usually read Gloucester City Manager, Leroy Rosenior's column in The Citizen because he always has an entertaining, quirky way of making his point, even if you disagree with it. Last week he wrote a piece which I think I should pass on to you verbatim, partly in the light of recent events. Here is what he had to say.

*"I went to Kingsholm on Sunday to watch Gloucester against London Scottish and, I must admit, had a great time.*

*"All the stewards and promotional staff were brilliant and made it a really enjoyable afternoon. The game itself seemed okay and Gloucester won, which was the important thing.*

*"What struck me the most were the people in the Shed. In fact, it came from all the supporters, but the Shed made so much noise for the Gloucester lads it was incredible.*

*"But when Scottish did something well they were all roundly applauded, which I have never, ever seen before at a football*

*match. Usually, if the opponents score, it goes deadly silent, with isolated shouts of abuse, but the rugby fans' instant reaction was to clap a bit of skill even if it was to the detriment of their own side.*

*"The excellent attitude of the supporters is something rugby should cherish. As rugby struggles to come to terms with professionalism, and looks on with envious eyes at the money generated by soccer's Premiership, the attitude of the paying supporters must never be allowed to be less than the sporting display I saw on Sunday."*

Thanks for that, Mr. Rosenior. We do appreciate healthy comment from a fellow professional sportsman who knows what he's talking about.

Now, perhaps, all those people who were quick to leap on the old, familiar bandwagon after the Wasps game will give equal prominence to this piece of informed commentary.

## PAIN IN THE NECK

Phil Vickery has proved a pain in the neck to opposing prop forwards all the way from Bath to Brisbane, so I suppose that it's only common justice that he should learn what it feels like himself. However, one does have to say that his timing is appalling.

The news that Phil will not have recovered from his recurrent neck injury sufficiently to play until early December could hardly have come at a worse time for Phil's international aspirations. It certainly means that he will miss the World Cup qualifiers against Holland and Italy, and could mean that he won't have had enough serious rugby under his

belt for consideration for the pre-Christmas internationals.

After that, we're into the Five Nations, and if his replacement in the England line-up has played a couple of blinders, then Phil will have it all to do again to retrieve his England shirt.

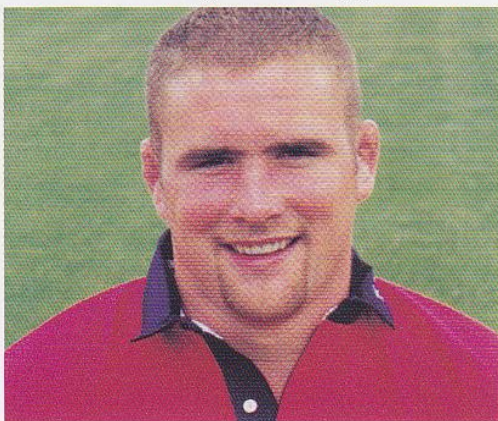
That is, of course, the worst-case scenario, and it is to be hoped that it doesn't transpire. And, apart from anything else, we want to see him back, creating his own brand of mayhem in the front row in the Premiership games.

I suppose that a neck injury must be just about the most troublesome for a prop forward. Perhaps Phil Vickery should have a word with the other Phil, Mr. Blakeway, who actually broke his neck but still managed a distinguished England career.

So, it's all the best to Phil Vickery. We all hope that the injury isn't so persistent as has been forecast, and that, in any event, he's fully fit and raring to go as soon as possible.

Must be purgatory for the poor bloke.

Similarly, if any other Gloucester club finds themselves in the same circumstances, I'll be glad to print their contact numbers. Drop me a line at 74, Victoria Street, Gloucester, GL1 4EW.





Continued from page 16

## THE TIMES THEY ARE A CHANGING

There are a few changes to the fixture list that perhaps you should make a note of. All of them have to do with TV coverage of Gloucester matches over the Christmas and New Year period. In fact, we shall be on the telly three times in just over a month, which will be good news for all those Gloucester Licensees who have installed large screens in their bars for just this sort of occasion.

However, the first alteration you might like to know about takes place as soon as next weekend, and has nothing to do with the Great God Television.

As you know, England are down to play a World Cup qualifier next Saturday, taking on the awesome might of Holland at

Huddersfield. So as to avoid a clash with this riveting encounter, our trip to Cardiff has been put back to SUNDAY, that is: November 15th, which is incidentally the day that Gloucester City Council officially switches on this year's Christmas lights, and Father Christmas arrives in the Docks. A trip to Cardiff, therefore, might just be a good way to avoid crowds and the general relentless onset of festive cheer.

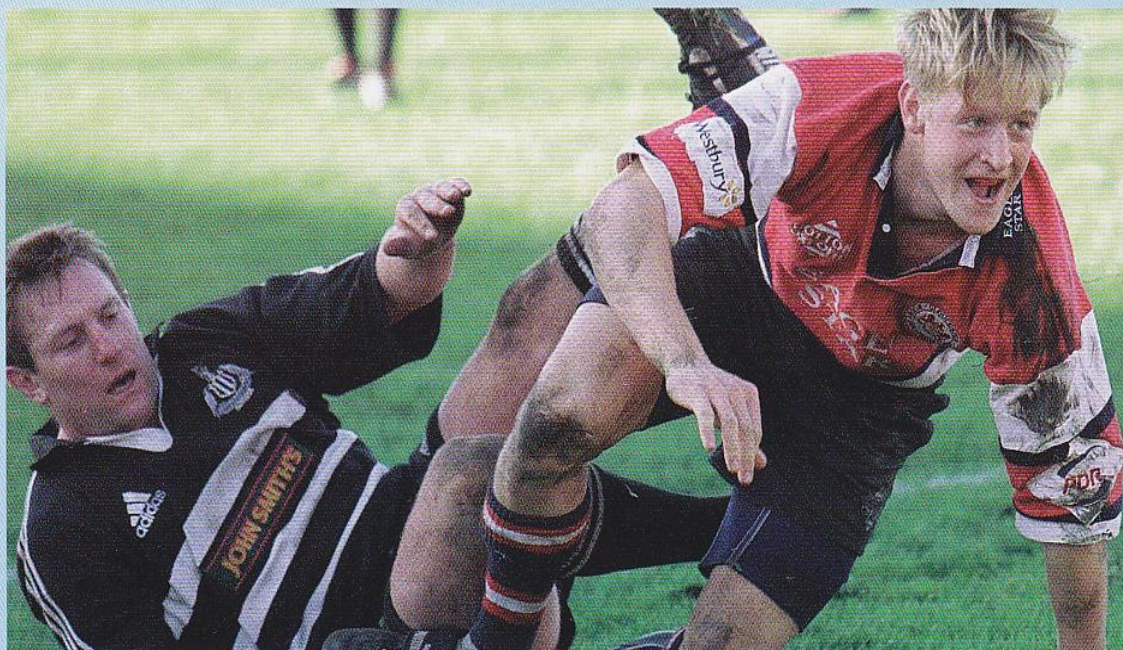
Now, back to the telly. On December 12th we visit Sale. The match will be covered by Sky, and will now kick off at 2.00pm (It says here. Don't Sky matches usually kick off at 2.15? No matter.)

Then, as is only right and proper,

our home match against Bath on Saturday, January 2nd is also to be televised and so also kicks off at 2.00pm. Not a bad way to blow away the cobwebs of New Year celebrations.

Finally, there are changes to our fixture against Richmond. At Sky's request, that game has been moved forward a day from Sunday, January 17th to Saturday, January 16th. Fair enough, but the sting comes in the tail. Kick-off time for that game is now scheduled for the distinctly unusual time of 4.15 pm.

That gives us a dilemma. Does one do one's drinking before the game or after it?





Peter Arnold

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Continued on page 25

## Kingsholm News

**W**ould you like to work at Kingsholm on match days?

Firstly, there are two opportunities for professionally-minded young people to be employed amidst all the excitement, hustle and bustle of your favourite premiership rugby club on matchdays. We'd like people over the age of 16 who have an outgoing and friendly disposition. And, of course, a passion for the Cherry and Whites! You won't be doing any bar or shop work so, for more details, phone Claudia at Kingsholm on 01452 381087.

## What about a mascot?

**H**uuuuuge furry bears, huuuuuge furry cats. It seems like every sports team in the country has got some kind of big, cuddly mascot these days. Our rivals Leicester have their famous tiger, for example. So, what about Gloucester? Should we have one? If we do, what should it stand for?

What do you think? Perhaps you think adopting a mascot will put us on a par or even get us one up on the other clubs. Does best mascot mean best team? On the other hand, you might think it's a waste of time and that just because everyone else is doing it, doesn't mean we have to as well. Whatever your views, write to Claudia at Kingsholm

**Gloucester RFC 01452 381087**



Continued from page 20

## UPDATE ON MATTHEW

My friend Mike Price ('Pricey of Shedhead') asks me to say a word of thanks to the large number of people who have been in touch to wish his son, Matthew, well in his fight against a very serious illness. Mike says he was "quite overwhelmed" by the level of support that Price Senior and Junior have received, and tells me that everything is progressing quite as well as everyone will have hoped.

In case you weren't at the London Scottish game, and so didn't see a programme, I should explain that 18 year-old Matthew is in hospital in Dudley undergoing a course of what is known as 'aggressive chemotherapy'. That's not nice for anyone, and especially bad for a lad who should be out discovering pubs and clubs (when he's not at Kingsholm), and dazzling the girls with his wit, charm and physique.

According to his consultant, a lot depends on Matt's own mental toughness, and his ability to remain positive throughout his adversity. On that front there wouldn't seem to be a problem.

As you will know, one of the side effects of this type of treatment is that all the patient's hair falls out. Matthew, who is rather proud of his flowing locks wasn't going to have any of that rubbish, so he launched a pre-emptive strike by arranging to have his head completely shaved.

The Club heard about that and resolved to do something about it. Now, rather than wear one of those amorphous woolly hats which are supplied on these occasions, Matthew is sitting up in bed sporting a cherry-and-white baseball cap, autographed by the Gloucester players.

Very nice gesture, I thought. And you'll want to join me in hoping that Matthew will soon be back on the Tump, trying to persuade his old man not to get into any more trouble than he can help.

Now - if Matthew Price can manage that then he really will have achieved something.

Keep your pecker up, Matt ! We're all rooting for you.

## ONLY TWO TO GO !

It comes as a decided shock to the system to realise that we only have two more home First Team fixtures between now and Christmas. Confound it all ! The season hardly seems to have started !

Happily, we haven't had to endure the sadly fractured season we had last year, and one can appreciate the reasons for the imminent hiatus. There are International games against Holland and Italy on November 14th and 22nd, and the revamped C & G Cup starts on the 28th. We have a bye through the first round in that one, and perhaps the lad will be due for a bit of a breather around then.

However, both home games have a great deal of interest attached to them. Two weeks today, that is November 21st, we expect a visit from Saracens, who were the pre-season favourites in many people's eyes, but haven't quite lived up to expectations in recent weeks. They are a very good side, however, positively oozing class and talent throughout the team, and will certainly be worth watching on this season's visit to Kingsholm.

After that, we have a visit to Sale, (with or without their exciting new hooker, whose name escapes me for the moment), and then, on December

19th, we could hardly have a better overture to the Festive Season than Leicester, who are still my own personal favourite for lifting the Premiership.

You won't want to miss either match, even though they might knock a hole in your Christmas shopping. Which brings up another matter.

One good excuse for coming along could be that you want to visit the Club Shop (in the car park) to top up your Christmas list. There's a veritable Aladdin's cave of goodies in there, ideal for any family member or friend who presents difficulties when you're trying to decide on an appropriate prezzy.

One very good reason for going along to the shop is that there is a simply ginormous price range, so you can buy anything from a modest stocking filler to the sort of expensive gift you might provide for your nearest and dearest, or perhaps for someone you would like to achieve that status. Anyway, why shouldn't you treat yourself at the festive time of year ? At least, you'd be sure of something you really want this year.

## TAILPIECE

Much of the pre-match pub chat having concerned the hooking fraternity recently, I can't help remembering an exchange I heard in the Imperial in Northgate Street a season or two ago. It went:

"I hear they've got a good hooker."

"Nah! You're thinking of his sister!"





# The Green, Green Grass of 'Holm

**T**he pitch you look at today is now 107 years old and has certainly seen some games in its lifetime, including internationals, divisional and county games.

Nowadays, with the advent of the professional game, matches are now mainly club-oriented hence fewer games.

The soil, which is still mainly the original black silt area, in the early years was removed and a layer of clinker from the factory which used to be next door was put down to assist drainage.

The pitch in more recent years has been top dressed with sharp sand and various combinations of sand/soil mixes, the most recent being a 50/50 sand/soil

Dave Balmer, Head Groundsman



mix of some 25 tons during the closed season. The grass seed used on the pitch is now a blend of four different rye grasses, supplied courtesy of our friend Bob Osbourne of Select Feeds and Seeds.

This is assisted in growing by using a slow-release fertiliser which, along with the travelling irrigation system or summer rain keeps the grass growing for up to 5 months. This sees us through the end of September when an application of slow-release autumn/winter fertiliser will see the pitch through to the start of the next season's growing season.

After-match renovation involves treading the divots back into place with rugby boots and filling with a mixture of top dressing and grass seed. The pitch will then be cut, if still growing, rolled and then spiked.

Once the team session on a Thursday has been completed, preparation for the forthcoming game can begin! It starts with mowing the pitch and the lines, followed by marking the lines and Gloucester logo. These operations will take up to Friday afternoon, weather permitting.

On match days, any outstanding jobs are completed before the flags and post protectors are put into place, ready for battle to commence!

**Please can I stress that keeping off the pitch once the final whistle has gone really does help me to keep the green, green grass of Kingsholm up to standard!**





# **GLOUCESTER**



# **BEDFORD**



Today's Match Day Sponsor:  
 Gardener Security

15	Chris Catling	T
14	Brian Johnson	
13	Terry Fanolua*	
12	Richard Tombs (capt)*	
11	Audley Lumsden*	
10	Simon Mannix*	
9	Scott Benton*	
1	Tony Windo	
2	Chris Fortey	T
3	Andy Deacon	
4	Rob Fidler*	
5	Mark Cornwell	
6	Steve Ojomoh*	T
7	Nathan Carter	
8	Simon Devereux	
16	Rob Jewell	
17	Ian Sanders	
18	Mark Mapletoft* 2c4f	
19	Trevor Woodman	
20	Neil McCarthy	
21	Dave Sims*	
22	Pete Glanville	

Full Back  
 Right Wing  
 Centre  
 Centre  
 Left Wing

Outside Half  
 Scrum Half

Prop  
 Hooker  
 Prop  
 Lock  
 Lock  
 Flanker  
 Flanker  
 No. 8

Replacements

\* Denotes International

Sam Howard  
 Rory Underwood  
 Joe Ewens  
 Alistair Murdoch  
 Darragh O'Mahony

Tony Yapp  
 Charlie Harrison

Clem Boyd  
 Jimmy Richards  
 Virgil Hartland  
 Dan Zaltzman  
 Scott Murray  
 James Cockle  
 Jason Forster  
 Junior Paramore

Ben Whetstone  
 Rob Ashforth  
 Michael Mainwaring  
 Chris Cano  
 Aaron Davis  
 Matt Deans  
 Roy Winters

Referee  
 Trevor Fisher  
 Touch Judges  
 Stuart Terheege  
 Fred Spong