

## CITIZEN SPORT

### Rugby Union

#### **Kingsholm need for paid management**

Gloucester rugby club treasurer Doug Wadley has warned of the need for a paid staff at the club if they are to stay at the highest level.

He said: "Rugby in its modern form needs real professionalism on the commercial and managerial as well as the playing side.

'If we want to stay in the top flight of clubs we need to consider a paid administration and executive.

'We have already built club offices and will be appointing a part-time clerical assistant, who will have the World Cup to deal with.'

Wadley said staff costs were a major factor in the large price increases requested by the club.

He added: 'We also constantly hear of players moving club for better incentives so we are committed to a major tour this year which will cost around £40-50,000, and we are looking at a medical scheme for the players which will cost approximately £15,000.

'In addition we have ongoing ground safety programmes, and of course, the rules keep changing.

'Even with the increases, we will need to have excellent gates throughout the season to cover our expenditure.'

Club member Derek Brown contended: 'This year, we are abandoning the wing stand and asking people to take a grandstand seat for 50 percent more, while terrace prices are up by a third on top of the 35 percent last year.'

He said the proposed increases were too excessive in the light of the present recession and rising unemployment, and put forward an alternative scale of charges.

Brown said: 'These increases would bring in substantial revenue without hammering the people who are the backbone of the club.'

The price rises were also attacked by Derek Knight, who said: 'This is a slight to the loyal supporters who come down here every season.'

'It gives me the feeling that the committee thinks it has carte blanche and can do whatever it likes, presenting us with a fait accompli.'

'Price rises should come on a gradual basis, but these increases are far in excess of inflation and senior citizens can no longer afford to pay them.'

Wadley said: 'We felt we had to put these prices to you with so many expenses in prospect.'

'In the past, rugby at Gloucester has been very cheap and in the past few years, it has been a catching-up exercise.'

But Mr. Brown's changes proved to be backed by a substantial majority and his amendments replaced the original price increases without a formal count being taken.

General secretary Terry Tandy commented after the meeting: 'I am disappointed the membership has not supported the committee. It means we haven't got the tools to do the job.'