

# GRPA

## Newsletter No 4



Design  
Champion Polo



### Gloster Boys Bar

After much consultation between the "Players Association representatives" and the Clubs Executive a new arrangement has been formulated resulting in us vacating the Lions Den and moving our designated socialising area to the Abbey Lounge. This brings us much closer to the action and more involvement with main parts of the club. This has resulted in much stricter admission policy, but if you wish to bring guests into the "new Bar" this can be achieved with prior arrangement with **Ron Etheridge**.

### 125 Charity Walk

The new Club President has already written to everyone informing you of his plans to celebrate 125 years at Kingsholm by getting 125 people to walk from Gloucester to Bristol (approx 37 miles) and watch the match down there **Sunday 26th March**. The route is still to be finalised, but there are many refreshment stops including an "Overnighter" at Thornbury Rugby Club. Contact **Fred Reed**

### Christmas Gift

**Malc King's** book on the history of Kingsholm was launched recently. The ideal Xmas present for any Glos RFC fan, buy your copy at a discount from the Club shop. You might even be in it! See further details page 5.

### Cricket Victory so close...



The 4th Annual Cricket match for the GRPA was held in July with this years match once again being decided in the last over. The Gloucester team captained by **Paul Williams** and supported by the likes of **Beck, Morgan, Keyse, Walford, Watling, Preedy, & Etheridge** were unable to defend their total of **280 for 21** wickets (yes 21 "outs"). The Jockeys XII ( we played 12 a side) needed 4 runs off the last two balls when Charlie Poste hit the penultimate ball for 6. Of course there was the matter of FINDING the ball in the long grass before the Jockeys could claim victory, which they did with 3 seconds left on the clock!! As usual, there was much debate about the result following many "Objections on various technical infringements" but no one could remember the rules after the 12 Litres of Pimms were drunk.



**Scottish Grand National winning jockey Robbie Dunn celebrating the Jockeys win with the "Bubbly"**

## Skittles Victory Denied



GRFP took on an experienced **Shedheads** Skittles team at the Farmers Club in September. Lead by **the Chairmen**, the team consisted of **Bayliss, Dix, Watkins, Potter, Stephens, Nicholls** as well as those pictured above. Although we found ourselves trailing after the first few legs, we managed to forge ahead as the team got to grips with the alley. This resulted in the former players going into the last leg ahead. Victory was snatched from us however, when the chairmen's wife (**Lesley**) inspired the Shedheads to a revival that saw them just sneak past our total at the final whistle. After several objections and appeals the result remained in favour of the Shedheads, but they must be fearing the return match planned for early in the New Year.

## The Presidents Birthday



was celebrated at the same venue on 26th August. Although the number on the was 99, someone suggested it was upside down. **Bob Clews** (pictured) was first in line for the cake when divided up.

## Golf Results improving.



Played 10 Won 3 Lost 3 Drew 3 Abandoned 1 (due to traffic hold up "en route" to course. The Team finished on a "High" with a commanding win over Bath (always sounds good) when **Eric Stephens** took over the Captaincy at Ross Golf course. However, this highly active branch of the GRPA owes all its success to **Bob Timms** who ensures FUN is the order of the day. He wants to thank the 20 odd people who have represented the team over the season. Bob has kept the games coming (Stroud and Leicester new fixtures) arranging players and hopefully new fixtures (Sarasons) next season. However next season will bring a change in the arrangements with Bob most likely appointing various people to "Captain the team" and "arrange the players" on the day. This will encourage greater diversity in representation, hopefully involving some of our "younger members". With Bob (now known as "**Spider**" - ask **Russ Hillier** - but apparently it's something to do with Bob's difficulty of GETTING OUT OF THE BATH concentrating on the fixtures. we might get into a position like the **Leicester Drogolites** who play up to 20 matches a year.

**CherryPickers Games.** As the "hard core" CherryPickers are getting a bit arthritic and struggling to get out of bed in the morning, well at least **Dave "Spanner" Spencer** is according to his wife, the GRFP committee has drafted **Adam Balding** into the team. He has much closer contacts with the more recently retired players and will be co-ordinating future fixtures. Spanner will still be involved with the games and should you wish to continue to "squeeze" into your shorts then get in contact with him. The current Club Executive are keen and given much support in continuing and maintaining the CherryPickers in some form or another.

## In Remembrance of them.....



**30 former players** took to the Kingsholm turf once again to remember our 3 team mates that have recently died pictured by J-P Corry.

Don Rutherford played 94 games at full back for Gloucester between 1964 and 1968. He was club captain in 1967-68 and captained Gloucestershire in 1965-66. Don won 14 caps for England, a total which would have been higher but for the injury which cut short his "British Lions tour of Australia & New Zealand" in 1966 and affected the rest of his Rugby career. He also made a number of appearances for the Barbarians between 1960 and 1968.

He became Technical Director of the Rugby Union in 1969 (their first professional appointment), a post he held until 1999, and was responsible for putting a national coaching structure in place. He was awarded the OBE in 2000 in recognition of his services to Rugby.

Steve Artus was a scrum half from Gordon League who played for Gloucester United in 1984-85 and 1985-86, making seven first team appearances (four as replacement).

Geoff Etheridge of Gloucester All Blues was the uncle of John Etheridge who played 117 times for Gloucester between 1984 and 1990.

Not sure if this **minutes applause** inspired the Current Gloucester team, but right from the start they took control of the match against Wasps and thoroughly entertained the Former players who had been treated to a "Re-union" courtesy of the Clubs executive. These re-unions are really appreciated by the "Old Gloster Boys" and are really grateful to those who arrange these occasions.



## Another Day at the races

The pictures tell the tale. But The £420 sweepstake was won by **Claire Morgan**, perhaps her missing the "Harvey Wallbangers" on the coach on the way to the races might have given her an advantage over the rest of us?. **Dave Spencer** claimed his bad back interfered with his ability to pick winners (see Picture picking someone up !!). The **Club President** experienced a "Whipping from his Wife, and there was a heavy presence of **GRFP Choir** at the back of the coach!



<http://www.gloucester rugbyhe>

## Proposed Activities



Having already had two "Players Days" by kind courtesy of the Club there are planned a couple more dates for later in the season. These will depend on availability, but are likely to be .... & ....

**Ron Etheridge** (pictured, I assume they left him behind and had to come back for him!) our Secretary will be letting everyone know via emails when the dates are finalised, that is of course if he not on another cruise!

Malc Preedy is currently working on another "Away Day" . The most likely venue will be Coventry to to watch Glos v Wasps on 26th Feb 2017 at the Ricoh Stadium which now seats 32,000 people. We need to secure a **number of at least 20 to make the trip**. Please let Malcolm know if you would be available and interested, then he can go ahead and make the necessary arrangements.

Email him [Malc Preedy](mailto:Malc Preedy) . [malc\\_preedy@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:malc_preedy@hotmail.co.uk) (if link not working).

We have all received details of the **Presidents 125 Walk** as mentioned above, but he has other plans including a Le Mans style 24hour Scalextric endurance race night! Teams of three (plus a reserve in case of intoxication and hence driver ban). This will be sometime in February when the nights are not quite so long, but "Beds will be available if you are TOO OLD for an "All nighter"!!! There will also be the 5th annual Cricket v National Hunt Jockeys. But hopefully further fixtures can be arranged against other former player Clubs similar to the golf matches.

Fred is pictured on the Kingsholm pitch after his announcement that he will be President for the next 3 years..... Have you seen his Blazer??



## 1977 USA Tour Re-union



We are hoping to have the 40 year reunion dinner at lunchtime at GRFC on **Friday 5th May 2016**

It was Gloucester RFC First long overseas tour and lasted 3 weeks. There were 6 first team games and 2 United games. We were unbeaten on tour.

**John Watkins** was captain and **Gordon Hudson** was team manager.

We took **38 players** and **7 committee** , and **3 supporters** including a reporter from the citizen

The team toured Columbus Ohio, Indianapolis, Battlecreek(Michigan), Champagne( university of Illinois) & Chicago

**Paul Williams** and **Fred Reed** will be organising

## Other Dates for the Diary

17th Feb 2017 (Friday evening) v Saracens GRFP Fixture, let Ronnie know you want a ticket.

15th April 2017 Saturday v Sale GRFP fixture.

1st April 2016 Hosting match at Hartpury v Loughborough College with lunch, transport supplied

TBC Away day at Lydney

## Dribuild Charity Golf Day

Pictured is the PGA team from the Dribuild Charity Golf day held at the Kendleshire. (Ross Parry, Bob Clews, Fred Reed & Mark Glanville). There will be more Charity golf days, but the big one of course is the Mike Nicholls memorial day and details for this will be sent out early into New Year.



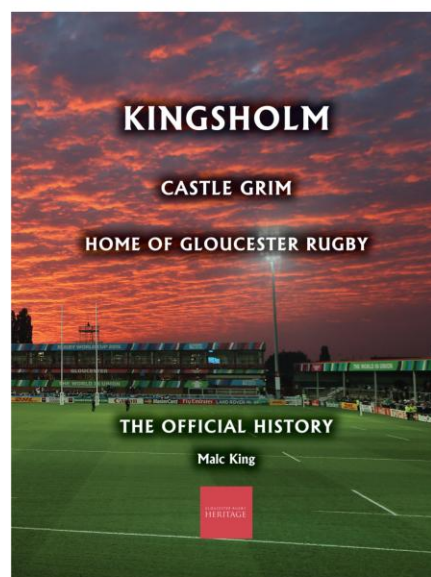
## NEW BOOK ON KINGSHOLM

The intense and passionate atmosphere of Kingsholm, home of Gloucester Rugby, has inspired players, enthused generations of supporters and made the ground famous around the world, since the Gloucester club moved there in 1891. This book tells the history of the ground - its origins as Castle Grim, how it came to be purchased and its development into a modern stadium.

The author, **Malc King**, is Chairman of the Gloucester Rugby Heritage CIO, a charitable organisation run by volunteers and supported by Gloucester Rugby and Gloucestershire Archives, and of course a GPA committee member. He has drawn on a rich collection of original documents and photographs to produce a detailed and fascinating account of the development of the ground over the past 125 years.

Many interesting stories are told of characters and events which have shaped the evolution of the ground. You can read about the first groundsman and his horse, balloon launches in Victorian times, what happened during wartime, how the main stand burned down, development of the Tump and the Shed, and changes of ownership in the professional era. The impact of Kingsholm on its many adherents is brought out through emotive quotes from players, referees, officials and supporters.

**Kingsholm – Castle Grim – Home of Gloucester Rugby – The Official History** has a normal retail price £19-95, but is available via the Gloucester Rugby shop at £15-95



## PROPPING FOR GLOUCESTER AND ENGLAND

*Gloucester has always produced outstanding prop forwards, not always given the recognition that they have deserved. We look at those who did receive the England call while at Kingsholm*

### TOM PRICE

Tom Price, renowned as a formidable opponent in tight and loose, made 152 appearances for Gloucester from 1934-1948. He played 35 games for Gloucestershire and won six England caps. He captained Gloucester in 1946-47.

Thomas William "Tom" Price was born in 1914. He made his debut for Gloucester in December 1934 and went on to play regularly in the second half of that season. He made his county debut in October of the following season and played for Gloucester throughout 1935-36.

In 1936-37 he suffered serious injury and even contemplated retirement at the age of 22. However he recovered to start the 1937-38 season and played for Gloucestershire and for the Possibles in the second England trial. Tom Price continued as a first choice for club and county up to the outbreak of WW2.

In 1945-46 he returned to play for Gloucester and was selected to play for England in unofficial Victory Internationals against Wales, Scotland, Ireland and New Zealand that season. He was appointed club captain for 1946-47 but only played in the first few games and resigned the captaincy in January due to illness. He returned at the start of the next season to play regularly for club and county and in March 1948 was selected to play for England against Scotland and France.

Tom Price joined Cheltenham in 1948 and continued to play for Cheltenham and for Gloucestershire until 1952. He played in all four Home Internationals of 1948-49 as a Cheltenham player.



### GEORGE HASTINGS

George William Hastings was born into a farming family in Dursley in November 1924. He made his debut for Gloucester at the start of the 1947-48 season and was a regular in the Gloucester side until his retirement in 1959-60. Big and mobile, he started his career as a utility forward but went on to become one of the great England props. He was Gloucester captain in 1954-55. George made 260 appearances for Gloucester and was capped 13 times by England. He played 34 games for Gloucestershire, culminating in a County Championship Final against Warwickshire in April 1959. He captained the county in 1955-56.



George Hastings first gained wider notice when he played for Western Counties against the All Blacks in 1953-54. The following season he played in all three England trials before gaining his first cap against Wales at Cardiff. The Times said of his selection "the powerful Hastings of Gloucester, as a lusty forward, is well worth his place, but is not everyone's idea of a front row prop." He went on to play in all four matches in the Five Nations Championship that year, scoring a try against Ireland.

In 1956-57, he played for England's grand slam winning side in all four Home Internationals and again in 1957-58, when England retained the Championship, he played in all four Home Internationals and against Australia.

Although George Hastings missed selection for the Lions tours of 1954 and 1959, he played no less than 20 times for the Barbarians, playing first on their Easter tour of South Wales in 1954-55 and touring Canada and South Africa in 1957-58.

The Times said in 1960: "C R Jacobs and G W Hastings helped to form the best front row that England have had since the war"

George, who lives in Spalding, is now one of the oldest surviving Gloucester players.

## TUG WILSON

"Tug" Wilson played for Gloucester in the 1961-62 and 1962-63 seasons, when serving as a corporal at RAF Innsworth. While a Gloucester player, he was capped by England against France at Twickenham in February 1963 and won five Gloucestershire caps, including a semi-final appearance against Warwickshire at Kingsholm that March. His last match at Kingsholm was for a County President's XV against Gloucester on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1963.

Kenneth "Tug" Wilson was born in Newark in 1938 and learnt his rugby at King's School, Grantham. He was an outstanding amateur boxer who won the RAF heavyweight title and gained a points decision over Billy "Golden Boy" Walker during his boxing career. He played rugby for the RAF and Combined Services alongside Mickey Booth, touring Rhodesia and Kenya in 1962. On leaving the RAF in 1963, he signed as a professional with Rugby League side Oldham for whom he played 321 games over the next twelve years. Tug's final game for Oldham was his testimonial match against the full England side in 1974.

## MIKE BURTON

The uncompromising Mike Burton is a true Gloucester legend, one of the dominant personalities of English rugby in the seventies. A mobile tight-head prop, both tigerish in the loose and a strong scrummager, his determination and will to win served his beloved Gloucester well, but, on his own admission, his abrasive style of play and his challenging of authority probably cost him England caps and a second Lions tour. In the second test of the 1975 series in Australia (the infamous "Battle of Brisbane") he became the first Englishman to be sent off at international level. Nonetheless, his record is an impressive one for that era of 17 England caps, including test wins in both South Africa and New Zealand, and a 1974 Lions tour of South Africa.



Michael Alan "Mike" Burton, was born in 1945 in Maidenhead but, moving to Gloucester, played his early rugby with the Longlevens club. In his autobiography *Never Stay Down* he tells of his single minded determination to succeed and of the profound influence of another uncompromising Gloucester character "Digger" Morris on his early career. He made his Gloucester debut at the age of 18 and went on to play 365 games between 1964 and 1978, captaining the club in 1975-76, and playing in Gloucester's cup final victories at Twickenham in 1972 and 1978. He played 49 times for Gloucestershire and was on the winning side in four of his five County Championship finals (1972-74-75-76). His eight Barbarians caps included Easter tours of South Wales in 1972 and 1973.

After retiring from rugby Mike Burton became a successful businessman. He has kept a close relationship with the club and is a Barbarians committee member.

## PHIL BLAKEWAY

Widely regarded as one of the finest prop forwards ever to represent Gloucester, comfortable on either side of the scrum, Phil Blakeway played 141 games for his club between 1971 and 1985 (including the 1982 Pilkington cup final) in a career blighted by injury. He played 19 games for Gloucestershire and won 19 caps for England, touring South Africa with the 1980 British Lions. He captained South and South West against the 1981 Australians and 1983 All Blacks, and was a Barbarian.

Born on New Years Eve 1950, Phil Blakeway was a product of Kings School, Sherborne and Cheltenham Colts. He played for Cheltenham against Gloucester at Kingsholm in April 1971 before joining the Gloucester club later that year.

In May 1975, having worked his way up through the England Under-23 and England B teams, he toured Australia with England although not playing in the internationals. Then, in October 1977, on the verge of a full cap, he broke his neck playing at Kingsholm against South Wales Police. Not realising the extent of the damage, he turned out for Gloucestershire against Cornwall three days later and exacerbated the injury.

It was thought his career was over but within eighteen months he had come back to make his debut for England and to keep his place throughout the 1980 Grand Slam season. This earned him a Lions tour of South Africa that summer, but a recurring rib injury forced him to leave the field during his first game of the tour – and ended his involvement.

Phil kept his England place for the next two seasons, enhancing his reputation, but following the 1982 England tour of North America he announced his retirement. Coming back once more the following year, he played throughout the Five Nations campaign and toured South Africa with England, starting in the first test alongside Steve Mills and Malcolm Preedy in an all-Gloucester front row. Now playing on borrowed time, he put in one last monumental effort to play through a final Five Nations season before retiring from all rugby in 1985.



#### GORDON SARGENT



Gordon Sargent made 200 appearances for Gloucester between 1976 and 1987, captaining his club in 1983-84 and playing in the 1978 and 1982 cup finals. He played regularly for Gloucestershire, appearing in the 1980 and 1981 County Championship Finals. A robust prop, who ran hard and straight, he represented England at Under-23 and B levels and gained one full international cap. He was a Barbarian in 1981 and 1982.

Gordon Sargent was born in Gloucester in 1949 and educated at Lydney Secondary School. He played for Lydney RFC for nine years from the age of 16 and was club captain for two years (1974-76). He had represented England at Under-23 level and Gloucestershire in two County Championship semi-finals by the time he joined Gloucester at the age of 26.

Gordon played for Gloucester throughout the successful 1978 cup campaign and toured Romania with England B that summer. Alternately in favour with either club or county, he was nonetheless chosen as the only prop on the bench for England's Grand Slam decider against Wales in 1980.

In 1980-81, again assigned to the bench, he finally came on for his only cap against Ireland at Dublin when Phil Blakeway was injured. He played for Gloucestershire in the 1981 County Championship Final and for the Barbarians in 1981 and 1982.

Limited opportunities at Gloucester caused Sargent to return to Lydney in 1982-83, but he was elected by the Gloucester players to return to captain the side the following year. This was the only time in the club's history that a player from an outside club had been invited to become captain. It was to be his last full season.

After retirement, he remained involved with the game as coach and then director of rugby at Lydney RFC, where he was a committee man and administrator at the time of his death in 2013.

## MALCOLM PREEDY

Loose-head prop Malcolm Preedy was a formidable presence both in the scrum and in the loose from an early age. He played for Gloucester in the 1982 and 1990 cup finals and for Gloucestershire in the 1984 County Championship final. He toured North America in 1982 and South Africa in 1984, where he won his only England cap. He made 313 appearances between 1979 and 1992 and captained his club in 1986-87.

Malcolm Preedy, born in September 1960 in Gloucester, learnt his rugby at Hucclecote Secondary School and arrived at Kingsholm at the age of 19 from Longlevens RFC, playing 24 games in his first year. After featuring prominently in Gloucester's record-breaking 1981-82 season, he was promoted from the Under-23 squad to take part in England's summer tour of North America.

He played for Gloucestershire in their County Championship victory over Somerset at Twickenham in 1984 and was then chosen for England's summer tour of South Africa, alongside Steve Mills and Phil Blakeway. The trio formed an all-Gloucester front row for the first test and appeared to have held their own against the formidable Springboks in a 33-15 defeat. All were dropped for the second test, however, and it was to be Preedy's only cap.

The durable Malcolm Preedy played with distinction for Gloucester for another eight seasons, captaining the side in 1986-87. He appeared in a second Twickenham Cup Final in 1989-90, his last full season.



## PHIL VICKERY

The sheer size and power of tight head Phil Vickery marked him out from the rest and earned him the nickname "Raging Bull". He played 145 games for Gloucester between 1995 and 2006 and captained the club from 2001 to 2003. 47 of his 73 England caps were won as a Gloucester player – a club record. He went on two British Lions tours (to Australia in 2001 and to South Africa in 2009), playing in 5 of the internationals and played in three World Cups (1999 – 2003 – 2007), including two finals, playing on the winning side in 2003 and captaining his country in the 2007 final.



Phil had already played for England at Under-16 and Colts level before joining Gloucester from Redruth in 1995, aged 19. Within three years of arriving at Kingsholm he came off the bench to play in England's 60-26 drubbing of Wales. His February 1998 debut was followed by a summer tour of Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, in which he was one of the few successes. He played in the 1999 World Cup and for the British Lions in Australia in 2001, a series that was narrowly lost, although the forward battle was won convincingly.

Vickery was Gloucester club captain in 2001-02 when they won the Zurich Championship, beating Bristol in the final, and again in 2002-03 when they topped the Premiership and beat Northampton in the Powergen Cup Final, although he was injured and unable to take part in the match.

Returning from injury, he played in all seven games of the victorious 2003 World Cup campaign, captaining England for the first time against Uruguay and, with his club loose head partner Trevor Woodman, dominating all opposition that they met in the competition.

Injuries to neck, shoulder, back and arm continued to hinder his career and to limit his appearances for club and country and in 2006 he was released by Gloucester and joined Wasps. Once again he came back to resurrect his career, playing a further 26 times for England. He captained his country in Argentina and to the final of the 2007 World Cup and toured South Africa with the British Lions in 2009, playing in two of the three tests.

#### TREVOR WOODMAN

Loose-head Trevor "Dougie" Woodman was a solid scrummager and extremely talented ball-handler, whose turn of pace made him ideally suited to the developing professional game. He played 140 games for Gloucester between 1996 and 2004 and won 21 England caps. A World Cup winner in 2003, he was regarded as one of the best loose-head props in world rugby when his career was sadly cut short by injury.

Just five months younger than his fellow Cornishman, he played for England Colts alongside Vickery and hooker Phil Greening before joining them at Kingsholm in 1996 to form a formidable young front row.

After consolidating his place in the Gloucester side during 1998-99 and playing a full season for England A, Woodman made his full England debut as a replacement in a World Cup warm-up match against the USA in August 1999 but it was not until November 2002 that he started for the first time against the All Blacks at Twickenham. He seized the opportunity to put in an outstanding performance and remained first choice England loose-head to the end of his career.

Woodman, at the peak of his form, played his part in Gloucester's great 2002-03 season, and then went on to World Cup glory with England at Sydney that autumn. After playing in the final, he returned to Gloucester to bring the house down with a superb try against Northampton at Kingsholm the following Saturday.

Trevor Woodman joined Sale in the summer of 2004, but within weeks sustained an injury to his back which led to his retirement from rugby, aged just 28. He is now a member of the coaching staff at Kingsholm.

AND FINALLY.....Honourable mention should be made of :

Hooker "**Bumps**" **Carpenter**, who started at prop, switching to hooker at half time, in his only international, against South Africa at Twickenham in 1932. Curiously, he was one of two specialist hookers picked by the England selectors for the match.

Flanker **John Watkins**, who at 14 stone packed down at tight head against South Africa at Ellis Park in 1972 while Stack Stevens was having a head wound stitched.

And, of course, loose-head **Robin Cowling**, who after playing 216 games for Gloucester, moved to Market Harborough and joined Leicester where he was capped eight times between 1977 and 1979.

Thanks to John Theyers and the Heritage Centre

## Keep Warm & Dry this Winter!

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