

Notable win for OPMs in France

A FEAST OF open rugby, producing a total of 130 points in two games, with a civic banquet at the end of it, were the rewards reaped by the OPM club as a result of their Easter tour to the Gironde region of South West France.

The region prides itself as the home of French rugby, and big crowds turned out for the two games against Casteljaleux and Catnieux.

The first at Casteljaleux turned into a festival of tries, with the home side running out eventual winners by 54-34.

Local interpretation of the rules and tiredness after their journey were blamed by OPM for the size of the score, but at the finish they admitted that they had learned a lot about French rugby.

Captieux, twice champions of the French fourth division in the last five years, provided even stiffer opposition for the second game.

They were captained by former national skipper Christian Danieux, but OPM refused to be intimidated by such fame, and handed the side their first home defeat of the season by 22-20.

Outstanding in the OPM side were Plymouth College school-boys Ian Thompson and Simon West.

After the game OPM were received by the town's mayor at a banquet which lasted well into the night.

Accommodation for the team was provided by Plymouth College master Roland Jones at his French villa.

The tour party consisted of Bill Fisher (capt), Andy Ashley, Chris Banbury, Steve Barretto, Alan Bisee, Preston Currie, Nick Hambly, Alan Harris, Digby Jess, Eddie Keast, Paddy Marsh, Martin O'Gara, Nick Partridge, Ian Punchard, Roger Rowe, Martyn Sandy, Ian Smith, Ian Thompson and Simon West, together with coach Robi Jones, interpreter Stuart Jones, touch judge Tommy Mutton own medical officer Ken Croft.

Payne's best throw

British hammer thrower Howard Payne recorded a career-best performance of 228 feet 10½ inches at an international athletics meeting in Johannesburg last night to win the event.

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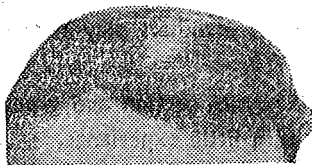
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