

MR LEICESTER

In association with the **Leicestershire Chronicle**

Battle honours of the regiment's rugby stars

My thanks to Colonel Michael Goldschmidt for supplying me with further information about the Leicestershire Regiment Rugby Union team successes in response to Mr Philip French's contribution about sport in the army.

Col Goldschmidt has also sent in the photograph, right, of the 1932 2nd Battalion team.

Col Goldschmidt whose book, *Marching With the Tigers*, is due to be published in June, provided more details about this famous cup team that included two full England international captains, Douglas Kendrew and Tony Novis.

CUP FINAL

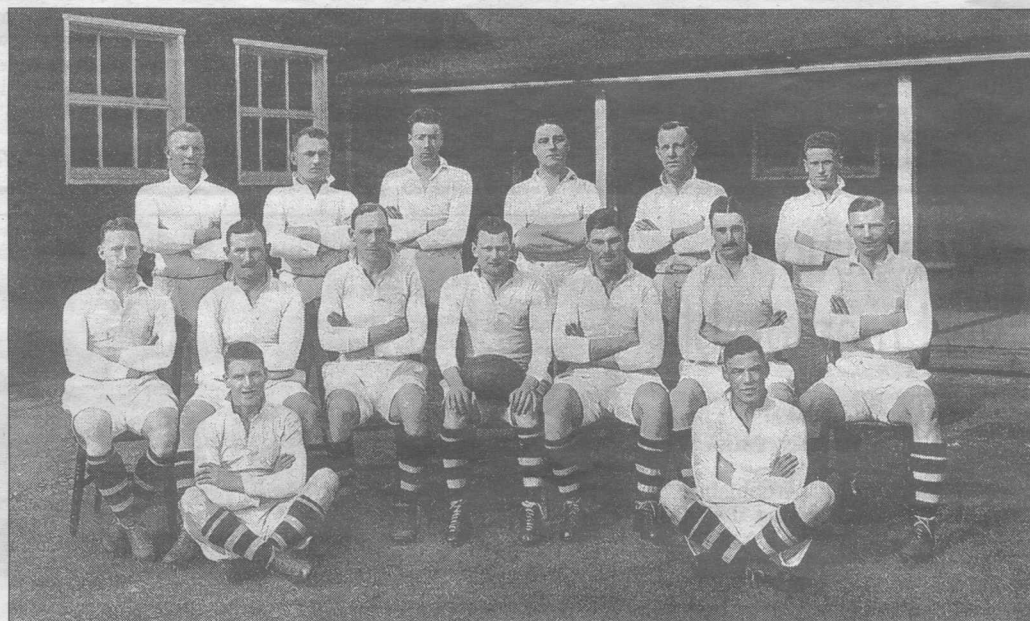
He tells me the team lost the 1932 Army Cup Final 11-3 to the 1st Battalion Welsh Guards and the following year 19-8 to the 1st Battalion Duke of Wellington's Regiment. And also reached three semi-finals before the Second World War.

However with the war looming by the end of the decade, members of this formidable team were set to face more difficult challenges with distinction.

Tony Novis was to be awarded the Military Cross for bravery at the Battle of Sidi Barani, Egypt, in December 1941.

Douglas "Joe" Kendrew won the DSO and two bars, commanding The York and Lancaster Regiment in Tunisia and Italy in 1943-44, and later a third bar for actions in Korea in 1953.

And Derek Watson when Lieutenant Colonel in 1945, was



TOP TEAM: The 2nd Battalion Leicestershire Regiment's rugby union team, runners-up in the 1932 Army Cup. Back row (left to right): Pte A Dawson, L/Cpl Cobb, L/Cpl W Hippsby, CSM A E Needham, CSM Morson, L/Sgt J Haynes; middle: Lt R G Bowley, Lt G B Anderson, Lt Beaty-Pownall, Lt A L Novis, 2nd/Lt D A Kendrew, Lt A G Withington, 2nd/Lt J E Watson; front: L/Cpl J Kirk and Cpl T L Barlow (Courtesy The Trustees of The Royal Leicestershire Regiment).

awarded the DSO when commanding the Kings African Rifles in Burma in 1944.

Two of the team, Arthur Withington, 35, and George Anderson, 32, when Majors, were killed in action with The Leicestershire Regiment as Company Commanders in Tunisia in 1943 and Crete in 1941, respectively.

Col Goldschmidt, a member of The Royal Tigers Association, told me Watson, Withington and Anderson have memorial plaques in the Regimental Chapel, at Leicester Cathedral, and the families of "Joe"

Kendrew and Tony Novis are planning to dedicate memorial plaques there on the next occasion when the Annual Regimental Service is held at the cathedral, which will be in June 2010.

This year's service will be at the Royal Tigers Wood on 28 June.

He also pointed out that three more members of the regiment gained full England international rugby honours: Captain Walter Carandini Wilson played twice in 1907, N Farr was capped four times for England between 1909 and 1913 and H O Godwin,

who also played for Coventry and the British Lions was capped 11 times between 1959 and 1967. TM Moll was capped once by South Africa in 1910.

Col Goldschmidt's forthcoming 400-page book, packed with 150 photographs, is the final volume of *The History of The Royal Leicestershire Regiment*.

It spans the years 1955-75 and covers all aspects of the period, including regular and TA battalions, the Depot, museum, regimental chapel, alliances and affiliations and is planned for launch during Royal Tigers Weekend at the end of June.

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