

= Pierre Guillemin =

Pierre Guillemin (13 September 1887 ? 18 August 1915) was a French rugby union player , who represented France , Paris and Racing Club de France (RCF) .

He was first selected to play for France in the Home Nations Championship of 1908 , playing in the games against England and Wales . The following year , he played against England and Ireland , and in 1910 , in all four Home Nations games . That year , he scored his only points for France , a try , against England in a close @-@ fought match , after which he gained a reputation for being amongst the best of the French forwards .

Guillemin 's final season playing for France was that of 1910 ? 11 . The French press disapproved of his selection , noting that he was excessively violent and not very effective . In 1911 , France won its first ever official international match , beating Scotland 16 ? 15 at home , but in the following game , away against England , the French were heavily beaten . Guillemin 's last match for France was against Wales ; he was dropped for the final game of the championship , against Ireland . He played on with RCF for one more season , playing in the team that was runner @-@ up in the Championnat de France .

An architect by profession , he became a lieutenant in the French infantry , and died on the front in the First World War after a reconnaissance mission in Bois le Prêtre in Belleville @-@ sur @-@ Meuse .

= = Early life = =

Guillemin was born in Bonneveau in the Loire Valley , France . He had a brother , Henry , who died in 1914 .

= = Rugby career = =

= = = Early years and selection for France = = =

Guillemin had been playing as a forward for Racing Club de France (RCF) in the Championnat de Paris since 1906 when he got the opportunity to trial for France . Ahead of the international matches against the Home Nations teams in 1908 , the Union des Sociétés Françaises de Sports Athlétiques (USFSA) organised two matches . The first was a North of France versus South match , after which a France team was formed to play against the Rest of France on 22 December at the Stade du Matin in Colombes . Guillemin was selected for the Rest . Ahead of the game , Reichel in Le Figaro gave France the odds of winning , since it had a heavier pack and better halfbacks , and also commented positively on Duval , Bonhomme and Guillemin . The Rest of France won 12 ? 6 . The cohesion of the Rest 's threequarter line , all coming from Stade Français , was especially apparent , while the forwards , although weaker in the scrum , and lighter , played with more " valour " . As a result , many changes were made for the team to play England on 1 January 1908 : the captain , Marc Giacardy , was dropped altogether , and Guillemin was one of several who won selection .

France hosted England at Colombes on 1 January 1908 for the third rugby encounter between the two nations . Although France lost the game 0 ? 19 , the press did not consider it a crushing defeat , given that on the previous occasions England had scored 35 points and then 41 . During the first half , two French players departed the field injured , so that by the second half , England had the advantage in numbers and were able to control the game , which at the start had appeared (to the French press) to be well @-@ balanced . The forwards were considered to be at least equal to , if not better , than the English . Guillemin and Duval amongst the forwards , as well as the backs Hubert and Moure , drew praise from Reichel .

Guillemin was selected for the next game between Wales and France on 2 March in Cardiff , Wales . It was the first official match played between the two nations and 20 @,@ 000 spectators turned up to watch . It was clear from the start that Wales was by far the stronger team , scoring in the first

three minutes and leading 17 ? 4 at half time . By the end of the game , the home team had scored nine tries , three of which were converted , and a penalty ; France managed to score just one drop @-@ goal , although it was considered " magnificent " .

Guillemin then played a series of matches for le Sporting Club de Madrid , made up of current and former pupils , against Trinity College , Cambridge , the first of which was held on 3 March at Cambridge , and a return match on 26 March at Parc des Princes .

Guillemin was selected to play the touring Australians on 2 January 1909 , but the match was cancelled due to bad weather .

= = = 1908 ? 10 = = =

In the trials match for the 1910 Five Nations Championship , Guillemin was selected to play for the Possibles against the Probables . The Probables won a close game 9 ? 6 , and Guillemin was selected again to play for France . The fourth match between England and France was held at Leicester on 30 January 1909 . The English dominated from the start but the French put up a good fight , as both the English and French press reported . The French forwards were compared in their style of play with those of Ireland , with good footballing skills . Although the English won a fourth successive victory , 22 ? 0 , it seemed as though the French game was beginning to develop .

On New Year 's Day 1910 , Wales hosted the French team , several of whose players were unable to attend due to the annual celebrations . For Wales , the match in Swansea was merely a " splendid preliminary canter " , and the home side was very much favourite to win . It was only the third match between the two nations : the first , held at Cardiff in 1908 , had proved popular due to the novelty . After the easy Welsh victory over France in Paris in 1909 , there was very little interest in the match in 1910 and few spectators turned up . Wales scored the first try from an intercepted pass in the first three minutes of the game but the French responded immediately with a try of their own . Nevertheless , despite the Welsh appearing not to take the game seriously , the Welsh lead at half @-@ time of 21 ? 14 and ended with a score of 49 ? 14 .

Scotland selected its best team for the encounter with France on 22 January at Inverleith , the first time it gave full international recognition to a French team . The French backs were said to be " very fast " , but the Scottish forwards far outplayed the French and the final score was 27 ? 0 .

On 3 March , France played host to England at the Parc des Princes . England were victorious but it was a good contest , with the final score 3 ? 11 . The French defended well , but England scored two tries and a conversion and were leading 0 ? 8 at half time . After the break , the French played with " dash and spirit " , repeatedly coming close to scoring until , with 20 minutes to go , Guillemin chased a long kick from Lesieur and scored a try , which went unconverted . For the final ten minutes , with an injury to Lane , France held on with fourteen men on the field . The French press was delighted not to have witnessed another crushing defeat , comparing the result with England 's recent score of 11 ? 6 against Wales . As well as having improved in the ability to play the game , the fitness of the players was much improved , and they were able to keep going right to the end . The annihilation anticipated for the second half did not come , with each side scoring three points , Guillemin amongst the best of the French forwards .

= = = Final seasons : 1910 ? 12 = = =

For the trials match between the Probables and the Possibles on 18 December 1910 at Colombes , Guillemin played for the Probables and was then selected for France . G. Neumeyer writing in la Culture physique , considered that the selectors had made the right choice of XV , with the exception of Guillemin . In his opinion , it was deplorable that he should be selected , noting his " remarkable brutality " , proof of which he demonstrated in the trials match , and that he ought to be thrown out of the national team for all time . Reichel in Le Figaro agreed that Guillemin 's play was more violent than effective and would have preferred the selection of Berneron , who did " great work " for the Possibles .

Guillemin was a member of the team that beat Scotland at Colombes in 1911 and won France 's

first victory in the Five Nations . After all the previous French losses to the Home Nations teams , the Scottish were favourites to win , and France 's unexpected win was considered a great occasion by the French press . It proved a reversal of the defeats , accompanied with humiliating press commentary which suggested that the French were too idle and debauched to produce a team worthy of their British opponents .

After unexpectedly winning the match against Scotland , France played England at Twickenham on 28 January and suffered " the most humiliating of defeats " . The Observer noted the speed of the French players , which caused the English some trouble , but there was a lack of cohesion in the midfield . The fullback , Dutour , was singled out as the best French player , whose kicking saved the French repeatedly , while in the forwards , Guillemin was especially noted for his defending .

On 28 February , 20 @, @ 000 spectators , a huge crowd for French rugby , turned out to watch the game against Wales . Although the Welsh went on to win 0 ? 15 , with three converted tries , they were prevented from scoring in the first half . They were clearly the better team , but the French played with greater passion . Once again , while Neumeyer praised the French forwards , he singled out Guillemin for criticism , creating an imbalance in the French scrum . The Chronique de la Jeunesse , however , highlights Guillemin 's dribbling with the ball . Nevertheless , for the final international match of the season against Ireland , Guillemin was dropped from the team , with approval from Reichel , although he nevertheless travelled to Cork as a replacement .

Guillemin was selected for an international match between the best of London and the best of Paris , played at Stade de France on 12 March . Reichel disapproved of Guillemin 's selection and suggested the Parisian front row was rather weak . In the event , London won 17 ? 21 in an end @-@ to @-@ end contest , in which both sides scored five tries , but London managed to convert three , while Paris only one .

Guillemin 's final plaudit came as part of the team that played Stade Toulousain in the final of the Championnat de France , and finished runner @-@ up . Although favourites to win and leading 0 ? 6 at half time , the visitors were narrowly beaten 8 ? 6 .

= = = International appearances = = =

= = Military service and death = =

Guillemin joined the 23rd Infantry Regiment as a lieutenant . While on a photographic reconnaissance mission over Bois le Prêtre in Belleville sur Meuse , he was killed on 18 August 1915 .