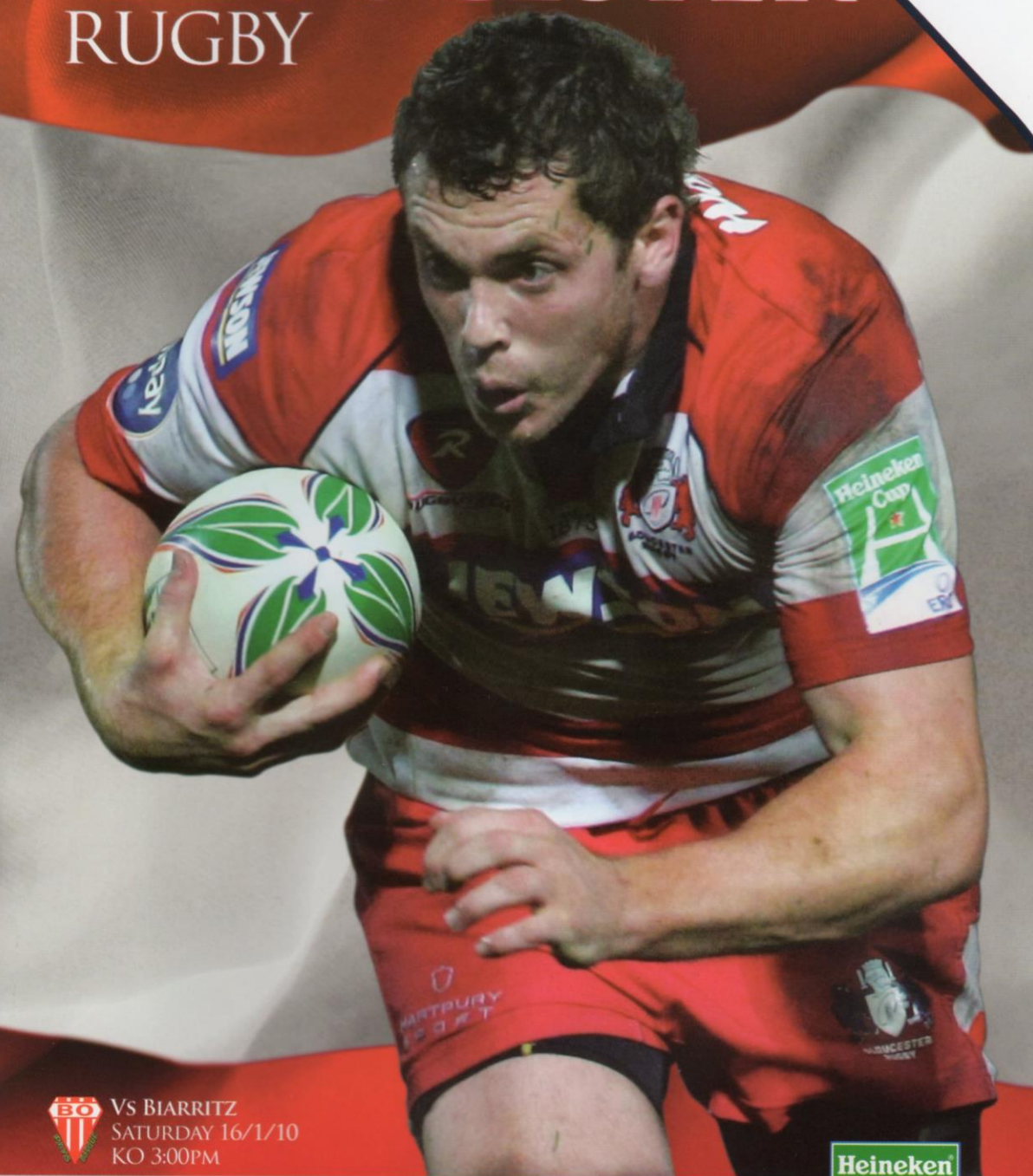


GLOUCESTER RUGBY

OFFICIAL MATCHDAY PROGRAMME // £3



VS BIARRITZ
SATURDAY 16/1/10
KO 3:00PM

Heineken Cup Round 5



FedEx



AMLIN



GARETH DELVE

GARETH DELVE CAPTAIN'S CORNER

ORDINARILY, I'd be thinking of wishing a warm welcome to the opposition in my programme notes but I'm not sure I can guarantee it given the recent weather conditions!

It's that time of year when you experience some of the very few down sides of being a professional rugby player.

Whilst a lot of people are enjoying the festive season, we're usually hard at work training or playing matches and, as everyone will understand over the past couple of weeks, it's been pretty cold outside!

Of course, it may favour us a little today given that our visitors from Biarritz hail from slightly warmer climes. As I write this, BBC Weather tells me that it's a tropical 3 degrees down in the South West of France and it won't dip below freezing at all over the next five

first meeting through injury and, although I'm told he's been injured recently, he may well feature today.

If he does travel, it'll be good to see him and I'm sure he will get a really good reception from the crowd as he did some great things in his time here.

When we last played them, back in mid October in Biarritz, the conditions were glorious but it's a game that still rankles with me.

I maintain even now that we played some really good rugby for half an hour or so and the lively home crowd were starting to get a little twitchy before Takudzwa Ngwenya took the game away from us with two superb solo scores just before half time.

Looking back on that will serve as a reminder of how clinical you need to be at this level. 60 even 70 minute performances aren't

I think everyone at the stadium that day will acknowledge that we ripped them to shreds in attack in the first 20 to 25 minutes. Q scored an opportunist try, I'm still not sure how Eli didn't get the ball down and we squandered other chances.

But a couple of defensive lapses let them back into the game and, in the end, we had to battle to get a draw from a game we should really have won.

We'll be focussed today. We need to be to keep our European ambitions alive.

Enjoy the game!

WHILST A LOT OF PEOPLE ARE ENJOYING THE FESTIVE SEASON, WE'RE USUALLY HARD AT WORK TRAINING OR PLAYING MATCHES AND, AS EVERYONE WILL UNDERSTAND OVER THE PAST COUPLE OF WEEKS, IT'S BEEN PRETTY COLD OUTSIDE!

days. It may come as a shock to them!

One man who will be able to give them an idea of what to expect here at Kingsholm of course is Iain Balshaw. Balsh missed the

acceptable. You will get punished for not being at your very best.

Our most recent game here, against Worcester, is a fine example of that.



GLOUCESTERRUGBY.CO.UK

CLUBNEWS

KEN NOTTAGE CLARIFIES CITIZEN COMMENTS

Gloucester Rugby MD Ken Nottage recently responded to supporter comments following an article printed in the Gloucester Citizen on Wednesday December 30th.

With 2009 rapidly drawing to a close, the Citizen asked Nottage to participate in an article to review events at Gloucester Rugby over the past decade. Ken joined Gloucester Rugby in June 2009 so his time at the club almost exactly spans the timescale in question.

Detailed answers were provided to 14 questions posed by the Citizen and were published in full in the December 30th edition.

However, also in the same edition, one quote was pulled out and used as the basis for an additional news item which provoked comments from supporters as it could be read that it implied criticism of the club's supporters, something Nottage strenuously denied today.

"We enjoy a good relationship with the Citizen and, when I was approached to contribute to the article, I did so in good faith as I thought it would make interesting editorial and provide some insight into the challenges of running of the club over the past 10 years and into the future."

"The overall article ran to almost 3,000 words but one quote has been used to create a second article. Unfortunately, the headline

used to head up the second article is slightly misleading."

"At no point did I say that future success was down to the fans nor did I issue any sort of challenge to them."

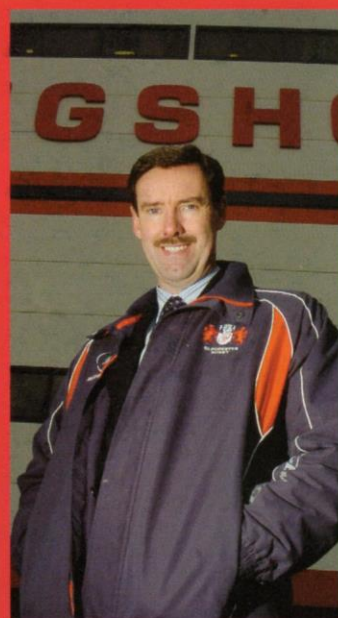
"When I was asked about the off field challenges facing the club, my comment about attendances figures being down this season and Gloucester Rugby needing ongoing support was simply a statement of fact and not any criticism of the club's supporters or their commitment."

"Gloucester Rugby is in the same situation as many other Guinness Premiership clubs. Attendances are down this season, for a number of reasons, and that affects us financially."

"I would not dream of criticising our supporters who stick with us through thick and thin. We fully appreciate that a lot of people have less disposable income during the current difficult financial times we face and have to be more discerning about how they spend it."

"I acknowledged this elsewhere in the original article and also stressed that the opinions of our supporters really do matter to us. They are our lifeblood."

"I honestly believe that Gloucester Rugby has the most faithful and passionate supporters in English rugby. My words were in no way



"I WOULD NOT DREAM OF CRITICISING OUR SUPPORTERS WHO STICK WITH US THROUGH THICK AND THIN. WE FULLY APPRECIATE THAT A LOT OF PEOPLE HAVE LESS DISPOSABLE INCOME DURING THE CURRENT DIFFICULT FINANCIAL TIMES WE FACE AND HAVE TO BE MORE DISCERNING ABOUT HOW THEY SPEND IT."

meant as a criticism of them. It was one quote in a long article. If they were misconstrued that way, I sincerely apologise."

BRYAN REDPATH HEAD COACH

ON behalf of everyone at Gloucester Rugby, I'd like to wish the players, staff and supporters of Biarritz Olympique a very warm welcome to Kingsholm this afternoon.

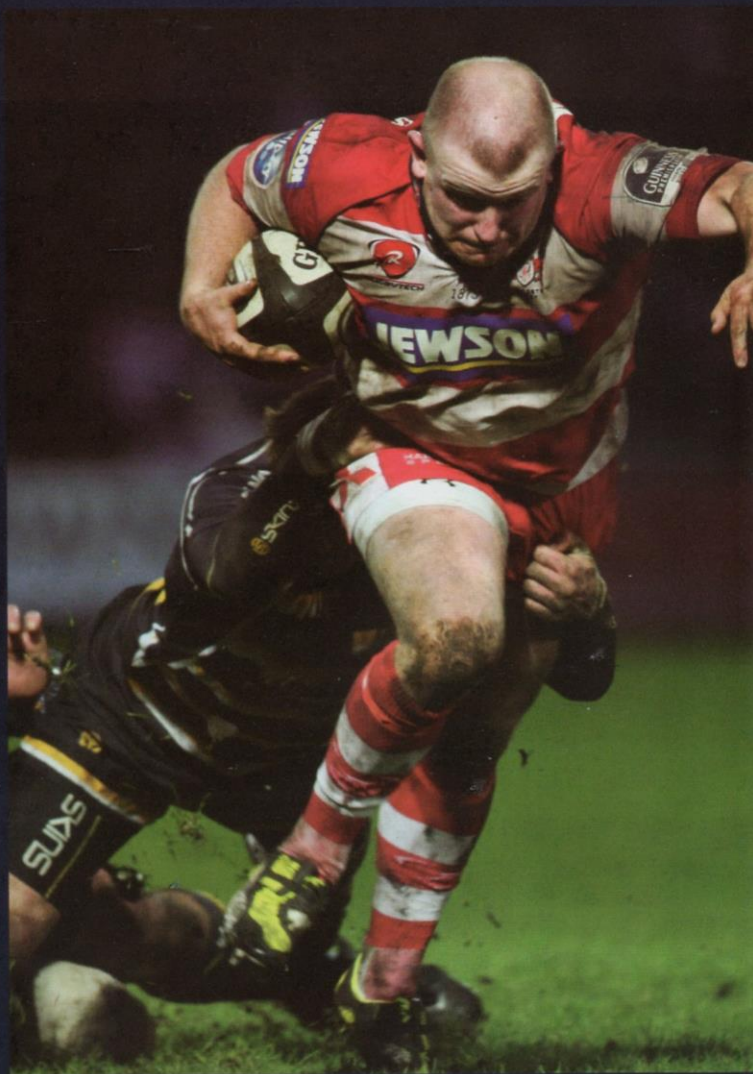
They'll all have travelled a long way for this afternoon's game and I gather it's a wee bit colder here in Gloucester than it has been in the South of France recently! The other Scots in our set up will back me up when I say that this is a mild winter by Scottish standards!

Where we do need to turn up the heat is on the pitch. Biarritz, of course, top Pool 2 of the Heineken Cup having won all four of their matches so far and are going pretty well in the Top 14 table in France in sixth place.

We currently occupy second place in Pool 2 and, given, we're ten points behind Biarritz, it's unlikely that we'll catch them to head the group.

However, there is still plenty to play for. The two best second placed teams will still qualify for the quarter finals of the Heineken Cup and the third, fourth and fifth ranked Heineken Cup Pool runners-up will qualify for the knock-out stages of the European Challenge Cup.

Above all, though, we want to win every game we play. Winning the next two games will be tough, make no mistake, but would give us real



self belief and confidence as we look forward.

It's our first game for a couple of weeks with last weekend's game at Newcastle having been postponed.

Whilst it's always frustrating to lose a game, I think that in this case, the administrators made absolutely the right call. Health and safety, both on and off the pitch, has to be paramount and it would have been tough to call

off the game if our supporters had already made their way to Newcastle.

What it has done is give us another week to let a few bumps and bruises heal and ensure that we've been able to focus on preparing for Biarritz this afternoon and Newport Gwent Dragons next weekend.

We need to build on what we did well against Worcester. I was pleased that we were creating chances in that game. Our work rate was exceptional, we broke tackles and made line breaks. The Worcester defence was very good but we didn't finish off the openings that we worked so hard to achieve. That meant that the game stayed close when a second score would have given us a bit of breathing space and made the rest of the game a completely different affair.

Again, it came down to detail and not quite executing properly. We turned over a lot of ball in attacking positions including a number of offloads out of the tackle which went to the opposition.

Ultimately to draw was frustrating as we dominated so many aspects of the game but only came away with two points.

We played a lot of good rugby though and that's encouraging. And to do so in front of a full house at Kingsholm was great. Our supporters were magnificent on the day and they should pat themselves on the back for playing their part in getting behind us when we were trying to get back into the game.

Our endeavour to come back after half time couldn't be faulted. The players

demonstrated exactly how much they want to play for Gloucester. With a little bit of confidence, I think we did enough to show that we are capable of being a very good side.

We will need more of that this afternoon as Biarritz aren't top of the pool for nothing. They showed down at the Parc des Sports Aguilera just how lethal they can be in attack if you give them a sniff of an opening.

We'll also have to keep an eye on our discipline in our own half which wasn't too bad against Worcester. Willie Walker was limited to kicking one penalty although arguably he missed an easy one towards the end.

We can't rely on Dmitri Yachvili being so generous though. He's top scorer in the tournament so far and that doesn't happen by accident. He's a quality kicker in addition to all the other aspects of his game and we need to deprive him of the opportunity to accumulate cheap points.

We have a big few months ahead of us and our destiny lies in our own hands. We can't hide behind injuries and suspensions as an excuse.

It's time to step it up a notch, starting this afternoon, and start delivering performances which realise our potential.

We know that we're a better side than we've shown so far this season and now's the time to start showing it.

...THERE IS STILL PLENTY TO PLAY FOR. THE TWO BEST SECOND PLACED TEAMS WILL STILL QUALIFY FOR THE QUARTER FINALS OF THE HEINEKEN CUP AND THE THIRD, FOURTH AND FIFTH RANKED HEINEKEN CUP POOL RUNNERS-UP WILL QUALIFY FOR THE KNOCK-OUT STAGES OF THE EUROPEAN CHALLENGE CUP.



GARETH BUTLER VIEW FROM THE CITIZEN

I don't know about the rest of you but I sat in the warmth of my living room last Sunday thanking my lucky stars I wasn't at Kingston Park, Newcastle. Let's hope the rearrangement can fall in warmer times as that ground finds ways of being cold when it's 30 degrees a mile down the road!

Apart from the opportunity to stay out of the weather which has gripped the nation recently, the weekend off will have done the Gloucester players a power of good.

No matter what league you play in, whether it's the Guinness Premiership or Gloucestershire Two, getting a free weekend at this point of the season is always welcome no matter who you are.

It would have given players the chance to have a bit of a belated Christmas after the real one was ruined by having a game the day after Boxing Day. There would probably have been a few beers at some point, away from the pressure cooker which playing for Gloucester has become due to the position they find themselves in at the midway point of the season.

The break seems to have allowed contract talks to be made a bit more of a priority too. After weeks of speculation about the lack of news coming out of Kingsholm, like the buses we got three in three days at the start of this week.

You could almost hear the sigh of relief from the fans as deals signed by Nick Wood, Alasdair Strokosch and Scott Lawson were announced, three players who



would have been on most fans' 'must keep' lists of those currently negotiating.

There are plenty more on that list and more announcements would be welcome, with that trio

the only ones confirmed at the time of writing. That is not to mention the coaching trio of Bryan Redpath, Denis Betts and Carl Hogg, who also have contracts which expire at the end of this campaign.

The Citizen



The Heineken Cup will be a welcome respite from Guinness Premiership action, where the pressure is well and truly on. Most have resigned themselves to the fact that qualification is unlikely for the quarter-finals, although the Amlin

Challenge Cup could still await. We have seen what a fillip a Challenge Cup win can be for a side's confidence and I would put Gloucester right in there among teams who have needed a spark in recent years.

I remember Wasps winning it one year and going on to win the Heineken the next, and when Gloucester won it against London Irish back in 2006, it hailed the arrival of the so-called 'golden generation', which never quite fulfilled its potential.

Biarritz are the opponents and they were thought to be without both Dimitri Yachvili and Damien Traille in the week. If that is the case, I can see nothing but a Gloucester win.

Over in France, these two were the unpickers of the Cherry and Whites. While Takudzwa Ngwenya was the finisher, it all came from Yachvili and Traille, the latter's right boot responsible for some unbelievable booming kicks when Gloucester coughed up possession, which he seemed able to land on a sixpence.

Today should also see the return of Iain Balshaw to Kingsholm, a player who I am sure will be afforded a warm reception.

While the winger is known throughout the rugby world as a dodgy full-back, he was always one of Gloucester's top performers in defence and attack and has certainly been sorely missed this season.

With a year left on his contract, you wonder how hard Gloucester tried to keep him last season, and how much they wish they would have done given how this year has gone.

It is all water under the bridge now, and I'm sure Balshaw would love to cross for one this afternoon, and few in the Shed would begrudge him provided the end result is in their favour.

BOB FENTON'S KINGSHOLM NEWS

AT THE time of writing, with the thermometer failing to climb out of the minuses and snow falling, the thought that we might manage to get a game on at Kingsholm this weekend needs to perhaps be filed under fantasy.

But that does not take into account the skill and dedication of our groundsman, Dave Balmer, and his hardy team who are probably out there sweeping away snow and ice while I sit here in the warm. Dave has an excellent track record of keeping games on, I think the number of matches lost to the weather over recent years can be counted on the fingers of one hand.

Usually at this stage of the Heineken Cup we are all pouring over calculators, slide rules and tables trying to work out all the possible permutations that are necessary to qualify for the later stages of the competition. I fear that things are a bit simpler this season, we need to pray for a minor miracle as we get five points from all our remaining games and Biarritz get nothing from theirs. Wishful thinking, I'm afraid.

But there is a good reason for going flat out for second place. While a best placed runners-up spot in the knock out stages is probably beyond us, there is the carrot of qualification for the knock out cup. I think this year it is called the Amlin Challenge Cup but who knows – it seems to change its name every other season.

Although it is undoubtedly the 'second division' of European competitions, it's worth winning. I remember the euphoria when

James Forrester sealed the win over London Irish at the Stoop – and any silverware is good silverware. It won't be easy though, there are some quality sides in that competition still.

Seeing Biarritz over here will give us the chance to welcome a couple of old boys back – Iain Balshaw and Dimitri Yachvili. Balsh got off to a flying start in his French career before getting himself crocked unfortunately, something that has blighted him throughout his career.

Dimitri has proved what a quality player he is, we were lucky to have him for a while and is someone who many people

would love to see back in a Gloucester shirt.

Of course in the time honoured tradition that they would expect, I hope they both have nightmare games today!

Moving away from the Kingsholm environment for a moment, regular visitors to the Shedweb website will have noticed that we have been running a series of votes to find a Gloucester 'dream team' from the past 25 years.

Not easy coming up with a favourite squad, no two supporters will ever agree on the full fifteen. The eventual line-up though is:

Gloucester 'dream team' from the past 25 years

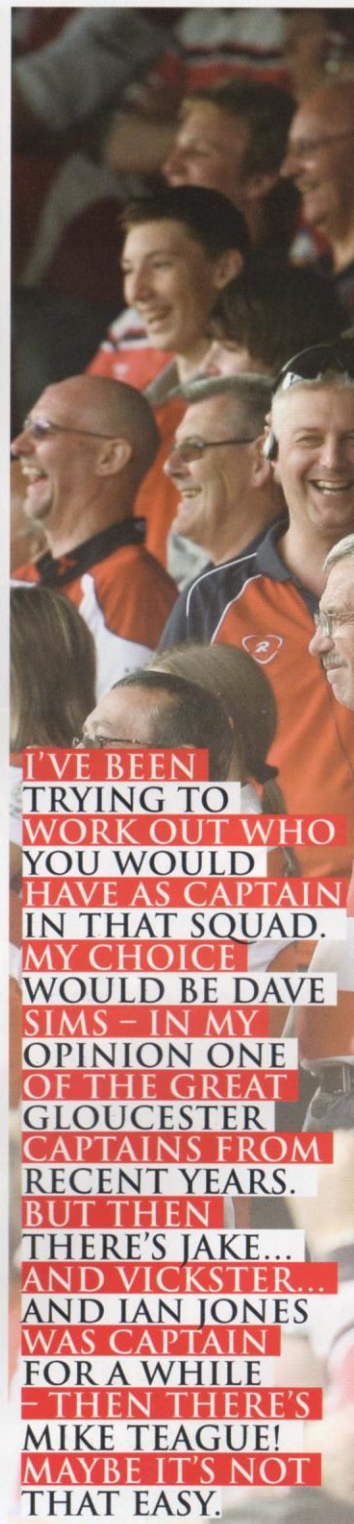
15. Chris Catling
14. James Simpson-Daniel
13. Terry Farolua
12. Richard Tombs
11. Phillipe Saint-Andre
10. Ludovic Mercier
9. Andy Gomarsall
8. Mike Teague
7. Andy Hazell
6. Jake Boer
5. Dave Sims
4. Ian Jones
3. Phil Vickery
2. Olivier Azam
1. Trevor Woodman



Some great names in that lot, and it's good to see a couple of older names – Iron Mike and Dave Sims coming into what is essentially our 2003 side. I've been trying to work out who you would have as captain in that squad. My choice would be Dave Sims – in my opinion one of the great Gloucester captains from recent years. But then there's Jake... and Vickster... And Ian Jones was captain for a while – then there's Mike Teague! Maybe it's not that easy.

Apart from it being a bit of fun to select this squad, the intention is to produce a souvenir booklet of some sort, who knows what that will look like but it will be sold to help raise money as part of our Help 4 Heroes fundraising that is going on this season.

Don't forget the Shedweb XV v Cherrypickers match at Widden on 18 April, by the way!



I'VE BEEN TRYING TO WORK OUT WHO YOU WOULD HAVE AS CAPTAIN IN THAT SQUAD. MY CHOICE WOULD BE DAVE SIMS – IN MY OPINION ONE OF THE GREAT GLOUCESTER CAPTAINS FROM RECENT YEARS. BUT THEN THERE'S JAKE... AND VICKSTER... AND IAN JONES WAS CAPTAIN FOR A WHILE – THEN THERE'S MIKE TEAGUE! MAYBE IT'S NOT THAT EASY.

TIM MOLENAAR



PLAYER PROFILE: TIM MOLENAAR

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

WHAT'S THE FIRST GAME YOU REMEMBER WATCHING?

I think it was South Africa vs New Zealand in the World Cup Final in 1995. It was the World Cup where Jonah Lomu set the tournament alight but the Springboks managed to shackle him in the final and lift the trophy



WHO IS YOUR SPORT'S BEST PUNDIT?

Will Greenwood. He knows what he's talking about and doesn't appear to just to be saying something for the sake of saying it.

He's been there and done it, he's got a World Cup winner's medal!

WHO'S GOT THE FLASHIEST MOTOR AT THE CLUB?

It's a bit of a toss up between Naz (Luke Narraway) and Voycey (Tom Voyce) I reckon.

WHO'S THE BEST DRESSER IN THE PLAYING DEPARTMENT?

I'll say Dave Lewis to be controversial!

IF MONEY WAS NO OBJECT WHAT WOULD YOU BUY?

I'd probably by some land and a farm in New Zealand. It's something I'd consider doing when rugby has come to an end but, the way the price of property has gone up in New Zealand in recent years, it's not likely to happen.

BEST TRY YOU'VE EVER SCORED?

I think it was playing club rugby for Wellington in New Zealand. The opposition had a couple of All Blacks in their line up so that's my claim to fame.

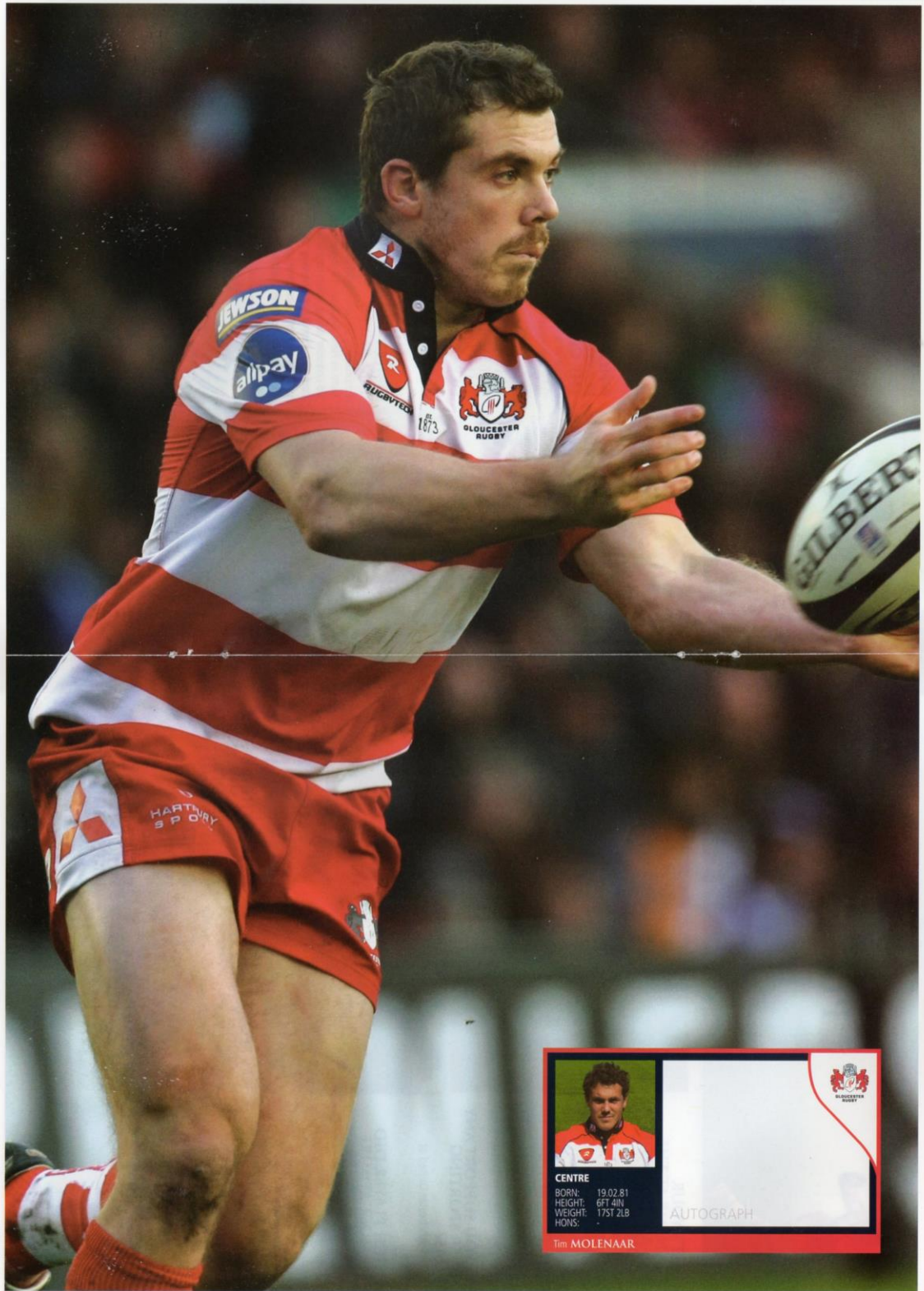
CAN YOU PLAY A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT?

Sadly, no.

IF YOU COULD BE IN A BAND, WHICH ONE WOULD YOU CHOOSE?

Kasabian





CENTRE

BORN: 19.02.81
HEIGHT: 6FT 4IN
WEIGHT: 175ST 2LB
HONS: -



AUTOGRAPH

Tim MOLENAAR

TIM MOLENAAR



PLAYER PROFILE: TIM MOLENAAR

WHAT'S YOUR NICKNAME AT THE CLUB AND HOW DID IT COME ABOUT?

I haven't picked up a nickname to be honest. I don't think Molenaar is the type of name that lends itself to it.

WHO IS YOUR BEST FRIEND IN RUGBY?

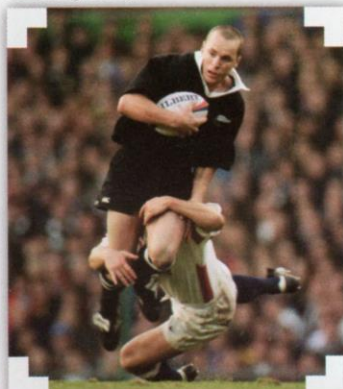
I'd say two of the guys I used to play with at Nottingham are my closest mates – Nic Rouse and Sam Raven

DO YOU SUPPORT ANY OTHER SPORTING TEAMS?

I follow Manchester United at football

WHICH PLAYER DID YOU MOST ADMIRE WHEN YOU WERE GROWING UP?

Christian Cullen. Incredible player. He moved so smoothly, he was moving at pace without even seeming to try.



HAS SPORT EVER BROUGHT TEARS TO YOUR EYES?

I can't say it has really.

IF THERE WAS ONE RUGBY RELATED RULE OR LAW THAT YOU COULD CHANGE, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

Speaking like a true New Zealander, I'd say bring back proper rucking to speed up the breakdown area

WHAT'S THE MOST COMMON MISTAKE YOU SEE PEOPLE MAKE WHEN PLAYING YOUR SPORT?

Basic handling skills – catching and passing.

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS THE BEST NIGHT OUT?

Buenos Aires in Argentina. I've been there on tour and it's pretty awesome.

DAVE KING'S WORLD OF RUGBY

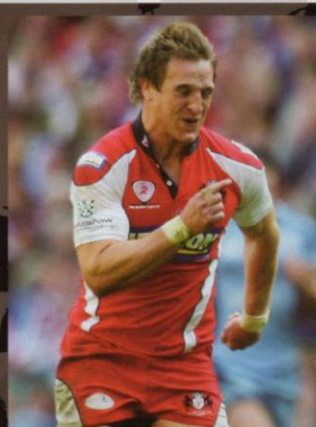


THE SAD passing of Bloddy Williams last summer brought back memories of his unique distinction of captaining both his club Cardiff and his country Wales to victory against the touring New Zealand 'All Blacks' in 1953. It was the last time that Wales defeated the 'All Blacks'. Bloddy was born in Taff Wells in 1923 and became one of eight brothers who played for Cardiff. As a centre three-quarter he recorded 41 tries in a season for Cardiff. In his career Bloddy amassed 185 tries for Cardiff. He had the honour in 2005 of being awarded the M.B.E. in the New Year Honours list.

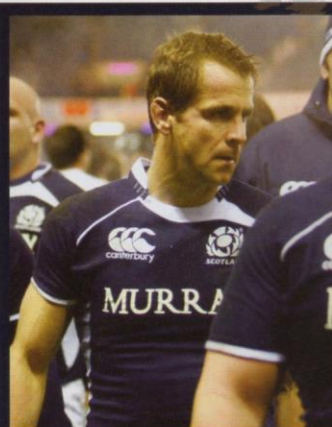
IN all competitions for the calendar year of 2009 our record read as follows: -

Venue	Played	Won	Drew	Lost	For	Against
Kingsholm	15	10	0	5	301	270
Away	17	2	0	15	252	462
OVERALL	32	12	0	20	553	732

We received 23 yellow cards, 8 at Kingsholm and 15 in away matches. Our poor away form meant that on average we conceded 27 points per match.



WHEN our former centre Matthew Watkins joined Newport Gwent Dragons last summer he was returning to Rodney Parade for the second time. Matthew originally spent five seasons with the Welsh Club. In his first spell with the Magners League club he made 118 appearances between 1997 and 2002. The retirement of Marc Stcherbina led to the Welsh club seeking a positive conclusion to talks which started last June.



OUR former fly half, Chris Paterson was one of six players on the verge of playing in 100 Tests. Those six players with the number of Tests they had played at the outset of the season were:

99 – Brian O'Driscoll, Ireland,
99 – George Smith, Australia,
99 – Raphael Ibanez, France,
98 – Colin Charvis, Wales,
96 – John Hayes, Ireland,
95 – Chris Paterson, Scotland,
95 – Ronan O'Gara, Ireland.

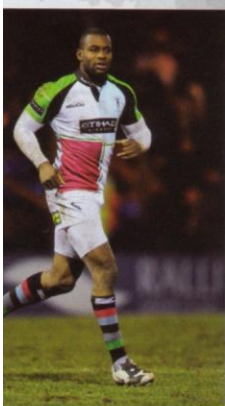
THE proposed venues for the 2015 World Cup to be held in England offer various capacities. Those listed with anticipated capacity are as follows:-

Twickenham:- 82,000, Wembley:- 90,000,
Millenium Stadium:- 75,500, Old Trafford:-
76,212, Emirates Stadium:- 60,355, St James Park:-
52,387, Anfield:- 43,570, Elland Road:- 39,401, St
Mary's Stadium:- 32,689, Ricoh Arena:- 32,609,
Welford Road:- 30,000, Kingsholm:- 16,500.



THE TIME span enjoyed by Bryan Redpath's predecessors as the Club's Head Coach have been as follows:
 - Richard Hill October 1995 to February 1999, Philippe St Andre February 1999 to February 2002, Nigel Melville March 2002 to May 2005, Dean Ryan, June 2005 to May 2009.

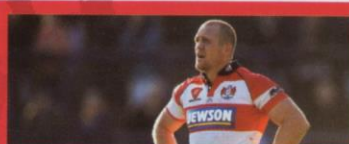
BRYAN Redpath was born on 2nd July 1971 in Galashiels. He is Scotland's most capped No. 9 with 60 caps from 1993 to 2003. He captained Scotland in 21 tests being second only to David Sole (25). Bryan played his club rugby union for Melrose, Edinburgh, Narbonne and Sale.



UGO MONYE, the Harlequins three quarter was adept at several sports. He had a trial with Arsenal Football Club. At athletics he ran the 100 metres in 10.46 seconds. His Christian name in full is Ugichuckwu.



MEDICINE and rugby union may seem a strange mixture but there have been six players who have played International rugby who have become practitioners. They are Felipe Contepomi of Argentina, J.P.R. Williams of Wales, Geoff Cross of Scotland, Jonathan Webb of England, Jannie Duplessis of South Africa and Jackie Kyle of Ireland.



DURING the duration of selecting his top XV of players that Andy Hazell had played with during his Gloucester Rugby career he pondered the question on how Gloucester had fared with and without Mike Tindall in the Gloucester fifteen.

A comprehensive look home and away reveals the following statistics in all competitions with Mike in the starting fifteen.

HOME

Won	Drew	Lost	For	Against
39	0	2	1,311	621

AWAY

Won	Drew	Lost	For	Against
16	2	16	702	594

And without the England International they read as follows: -

HOME

Won	Drew	Lost	For	Against
19	1	6	695	404

AWAY

Won	Drew	Lost	For	Against
8	1	18	550	672



ROB ELLOWAY, our former hooker recently chose the best XV he had played with and against. Rob's team was:- Marika Vakecegu; James Simpson-Daniel, Terry Fanolua, Luke McAlister, Joe Rokocoko; Ryan Lamb, Simon Amor; Trevor Woodman, Dimitri Szarzewski, Andy Deacon; Heino Senekal, Nick Kennedy; Jake Boer, Tinus Plessis and Tim Cowley.



PETER ARNOLD'S GLOUCESTER TALK



IS ANYONE OUT THERE?

Of course, I might be wasting my time here. There's no guarantee, at the time of writing, that there will be any game today.

As I look out of my window, not very far from Kingsholm, there's plenty of snow still lying around, and the road looks like a sheet of glass.

Hardy souls who have ventured out tell me that the temperature is low enough to freeze the balls off a brass pawnbroker. It is certainly not a day for standing around in an icebound Shed, so we must just wrap up warm and hope like mad that things will have warmed up a bit by the time you read this.

The whole thing might come as something of a culture shock to people travelling all the way from the South of France.

It's a long way to travel at the best of times, but with transport difficulties affecting most of Europe, the trip must be a bit daunting even for the most diehard of Biarritz supporters.

If there is to be a cancellation, I

imagine that it will happen early, and we'll all have plenty of notice that we'll need to curl up with a good bottle come the weekend.

Still, one must press on, believing that hope springs eternal.

WHISTLE BLOWERS

It is a convention as old as the game itself. One does not complain about the referee. Not in public, anyway. What you might say to your mates over a pint in the bar after the match is one thing, but a pronouncement to the press criticising the man with the whistle is beyond the pale.

Years ago, on learning that a ref who we all cordially disliked had been dropped from the International panel, I commented on the fact in these pages, and the County Referees Society came down on me like a ton of bricks.

What had I said to incur such wrath? No more than "Oh dear. What a pity. Never mind." Which I thought was fairly innocuous.

As did the club. The late Terry Tandy, club secretary at the time, rang me up about it. "Look Pete" he said, "I

have to talk to you about this, but actually, we thought you went a bit easy on him."

This convention seems to be in tatters nowadays. Mr Venter of Saracens is facing charges of bringing the game into disrepute over remarks he made to the press after his side had lost a match.

There was obvious frustration and perhaps a hint of sour grapes in his tirade which slated, not just the official who had run his own game, but the standard of refereeing throughout the whole Premiership. In effect, he said that the refs were killing the game.

No doubt he went a bit over the top and crossed the line somewhat, but it must be clear that, this season, there does seem to be a problem. Several coaches have voiced more muted criticism in matches all over



IF THERE IS TO BE A CANCELLATION, I IMAGINE THAT IT WILL HAPPEN EARLY, AND WE'LL ALL HAVE PLENTY OF NOTICE THAT WE'LL NEED TO CURL UP WITH A GOOD BOTTLE COME THE WEEKEND.

the country, and I've heard more rumblings from fans than I usually do. We even booed a ref off at half time right here at Kingsholm, and I don't recall that happening before.

I'm not trying to defend Mr Venter in any way at all, but just possibly, his disrepute charge could turn out to be a good thing. If it concentrates the mind of the 'Powers That Be' on a problem which has been looming for some time now, then perhaps something can be done about it.

I don't know what, but I do know that things which are allowed to simmer away under the surface have a way of erupting into something nasty, and none of us would want that.

HELP WANTED

Had an interesting Email from Dave Fox the other day. He's



looking for some info which I'm sure someone out there will be able to supply. I think the best thing I can do is give you the email just as I received it.

My apologies for bothering you. Duncan Wood, who I have known for many years, has passed on your Email address to me.

First of all, I have been asked to help find some rugby information on J.C.Brooks, a Gloucester three-quarter from the 1930s.

I have his Gloucestershire and England Trial information but wondered if you had any information regarding his club rugby - e.g span of career, number of games, points scored etc. and maybe his junior club.

This request has come from

the GRFU - I am the County Rugby press officer. Don't put yourself out, but I wondered if you could lay your hands on the stats quickly? Also, do you know of a photo of him?

My second question is more personal to me. I am also press officer to the Thornbury RFC and the club celebrates its Golden Jubilee in 2013. I am writing a book and wondered if your extensive archive might have some information I could borrow?

Kind Regards,
Dave Fox
Gloucestershire RFU
Publicity Officer.

Well Dave, my 'extensive archive' is confined to the space between my ears and I'm afraid there are holes where both J.C.Brooks and Thornbury are concerned. I hope someone out there can help and can ring you on 01454 884077.

PITCH UPDATE

View From Pitchside



The pitch at Kingsholm needed to be covered prior to the Heineken Cup match against Glasgow Warriors on December 20th due to cold weather and similarly protected before the Guinness Premiership against Worcester Warriors on January 2nd. Last week came the snow and on Monday morning, at Kingsholm lay deep and crisp and even!



The first step was to use tractors to shift as much snow as possible off the covers and to the sides of the pitch.



The covers were then rolled to gather the remaining snow which was then taken away by wheelbarrows.



However Stadium Manager Dave Balmer and Operations Manager Sean Roberts were determined that the Biarritz fixture would go ahead as scheduled.



On Tuesday, all the snow gathered at the sides of the pitch was shifted and fingers crossed that Tuesday night's snowfall wouldn't be too severe.



The final stage was to await the heated covers which had been covering Bristol City's ground at Ashton Gate until Tuesday evening which would allow warm air to circulate over the covered pitch.

Wednesday morning!



SATURDAY 2ND JANUARY 2010 / 15:00 KO

**GLOUCESTER RUGBY 13****WORCESTER WARRIORS 13****COACH'S COMMENTS**

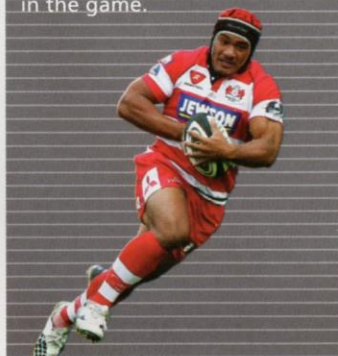
"I am chuffed that we created the chances we did, but we didn't finish off and I have to try to create confidence in the decision-making side of things."

"I am disappointed with the draw because I thought we dominated most of the game. We just didn't take our opportunities."

KEY MOMENT

Gloucester were in the ascendant in the first quarter and playing some exciting and incisive rugby. A second score would have given Bryan Redpath's side some breathing space and it looked set to come as Eliota Fuimaono-Sapolu supported Nicky Robinson's break.

The Samoan international looked odds on to score but a combination of Chris Latham's tackle and Tom Wood's steal rescued Worcester and allowed the Warriors to stay in the game.



Gloucester and Worcester got 2010 off to a nail biting start as they slugged out a 13-13 draw at Kingsholm with Dave Attwood's last gasp try rescuing Gloucester with Carlos Spencer's potential match winning conversion fading just wide.

Two points to either side but the question on everyone's lips as the post match discussions started in earnest was how on earth did Gloucester fail to win by a country mile?

That's not to take anything away from the visitors who competed gamely and took the two opportunities that came their way. But even the most ardent and one eyed Warriors supporter will admit

that his side were cut to shreds in the first quarter in particular and how Mike Ruddock's side escaped with only conceding one try will remain a mystery.

However, escape they did and Worcester didn't dwell on the matter. On the contrary, they took full advantage of two defensive lapses to turn the game on its head and go into half time with a 13-5 lead.

The situation bore an uncanny resemblance to Worcester's last visit to Kingsholm last April when the Warriors soaked up intense pressure before scoring a breakaway try just before half time and then keeping Gloucester at

WORCESTER'S DEFENCE WAS COMMITTED, IF NOT ALWAYS LEGAL! SOME OF GLOUCESTER'S FRUSTRATIONS STEMMED FROM THE INCREASING PENALTY COUNT AGAINST THE WARRIORS WITHOUT ANY SIGN OF A CARD BEING ISSUED.



bay for the whole of the second half to secure the win.

Nicky Robinson did kick a 43rd minute penalty to narrow the deficit but the second half rapidly became a tale of frustration as Gloucester looked set, time and again, to get back on level terms but couldn't quite make the breakthrough.

Worcester's defence was committed, if not always legal! Some of Gloucester's frustrations stemmed from the increasing penalty count against the Warriors without any sign of a card being issued.

It did look increasingly as though history was about to repeat itself

until the crucial late introduction of Carlos Spencer.

The former All Black quickly dipped into his box of tricks and started to stretch the Worcester defence with a variety of passes and cross kicks.

Even so, time was almost up on the clock when replacement second row Dave Attwood popped up in the wide channel to shrug off Chris Latham and dive over to level the scores.

Spencer could have grabbed the glory but his conversion attempt was just wide leaving Gloucester experiencing a bizarre combination of relief and disappointment.

THE TEAMS

GLOUCESTER RUGBY

Morgan
Sharples
Simpson-Daniel
Fuimaono-Sapolu
Vainikolo
Robinson
Lewis
Wood
S. Lawson
Somerville
Eustace
Brown
Strokosch
Qera
Delve

REPLACEMENTS:

Molenaar for Sharples (36), Spencer for Robinson (75), A. Williams for Lewis (68), Narraway for Delve (61), Attwood for Eustace (52), Azam for S. Lawson (61), Dickinson for Wood (40).

NOT USED: Capdevielle.



WORCESTER WARRIORS

Latham
Gear
Grove
Rasmussen
Benjamin
Walker
Arr
Black
Fortey
Sourgens
Rawlinson
Gillies
Wood
Sanderson
Horstmann

REPLACEMENTS:

Gilding for Sourgens (71), Lutui for Fortey (52), Mullan for A. Black (52).

NOT USED: Kitchener, Collins, Powell, Jones, MacRae.

DAVE ATTWOOD SECOND TO NONE

Second row Dave Attwood has been one of the big successes of what has otherwise been a mixed season for Gloucester. A summer arrival from relegated Bristol, his home city team, he has quickly made himself a firm favourite of the Cherry and White faithful with a string of sparkling performances that have seen him reduce some big-name opponents to relative anonymity.

A talented swimmer and athlete – he threw the discus

internationally at age group level – he doesn't fit the old stereotype of a lumbering lock, with a joint honours degree in Physics and Philosophy from Bristol University, achieved while on a part-time professional contract at Bristol Rugby.

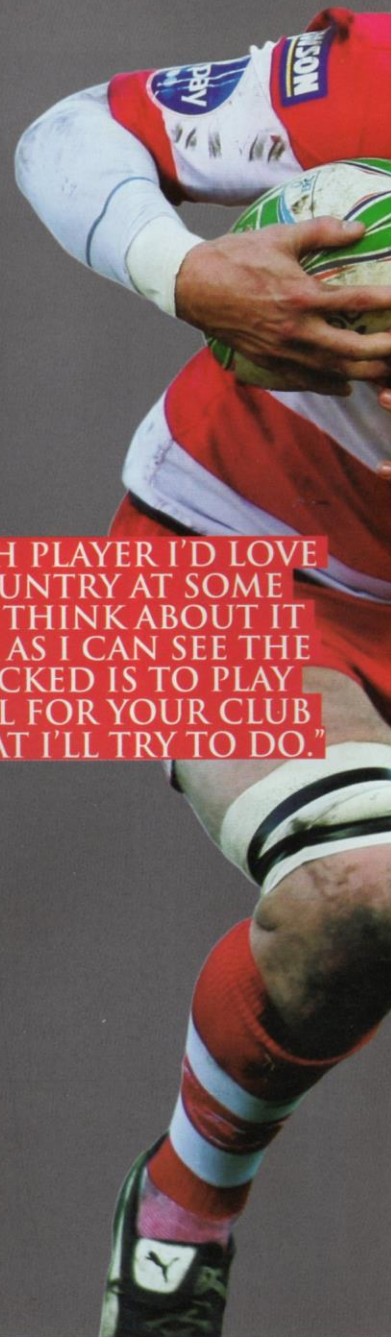
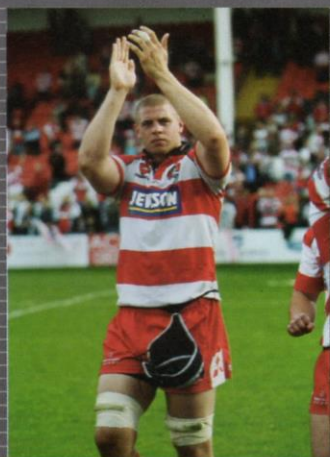
"No, I guess it is a bit unusual but it fits in with the way that rugby is trying to develop younger players. I chose physics and philosophy because it was just about the broadest course there was, so it gives me options for later life. The game is so physical now that there's a likelihood that

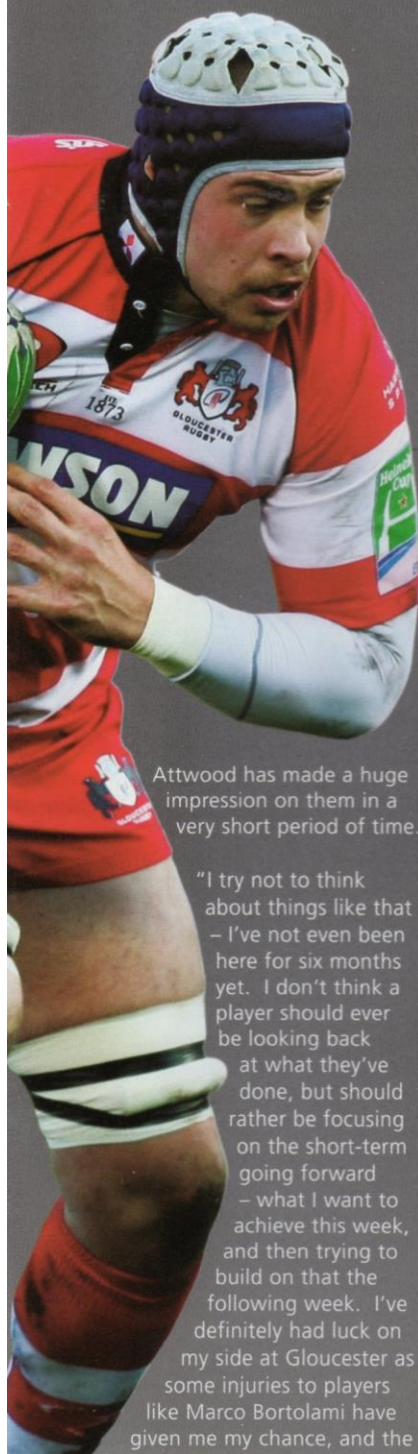
"LIKE EVERY ENGLISH PLAYER I'D LOVE TO PLAY FOR MY COUNTRY AT SOME STAGE, BUT I DON'T THINK ABOUT IT VERY MUCH. AS FAR AS I CAN SEE THE BEST WAY TO GET PICKED IS TO PLAY CONSISTENTLY WELL FOR YOUR CLUB SIDE SO THAT'S WHAT I'LL TRY TO DO."

a player's career can be cut short, so having a qualification outside of rugby is ever more important. If I'm honest, I was pretty much full-time at both rugby and at University, which was a bit of a blast!

"It's never an easy decision to leave your home club, but it was made easier by the fact that I didn't need to leave the city and I still have a lot of friends at Bristol Rugby. I had to step back from the emotion of the situation, and looking back I'm confident that I made the right decision."

Like most rugby supporters, Gloucester's are very quick to acclaim a player a hero, and





Attwood has made a huge impression on them in a very short period of time.

"I try not to think about things like that – I've not even been here for six months yet. I don't think a player should ever be looking back at what they've done, but should rather be focusing on the short-term going forward – what I want to achieve this week, and then trying to build on that the following week. I've definitely had luck on my side at Gloucester as some injuries to players like Marco Bortolami have given me my chance, and the

Written by Colin Boag of The Rugby Paper, this feature was first published in The Rugby Paper.

Colin is a Gloucester season ticket holder as well as writing for The Rugby Paper, which is available every Sunday from all good newsagents.

style of rugby we're trying to play seems to suit my game."

If you watch Attwood in a game he doesn't hold back on expressing an opinion, irrespective of the seniority or reputation of the players around him.

"That's just me: I like to have a bit of a say in how things are going. I like to feel that I can make people accountable, and that in turn I can be held accountable for my actions – that was spotted and actively encouraged by the coaches. You can't have too many leaders in a side and that's an aspect of my game that I'm keen to develop.

"I'm lucky to have some really good people around me at Gloucester. I travel up from Bristol with Alex Brown and Will James, and as they're second rows too they have both been influences on me. Gareth Delve is our club captain, and I obviously try to observe the way that he behaves – how he reacts to the things around him and so on. Mike Tindall has been there and done it all at the highest level of the game – in a season that hasn't yet gone as well as we'd hoped, it's interesting to see how someone like him copes with things. As the heavier second row I pack down behind the tight head, and Greg Somerville, with his wealth of experience, knows most of the answers.

"Like every English player I'd love to play for my country at some stage, but I don't think about it very much. As far as I can see the best way to get picked is to

TheRUGBYPaper

THE BEST CONTENT FROM ALL THE WEEKEND'S RUGBY



play consistently well for your club side so that's what I'll try to do."

At only 22, Dave Attwood already cuts an impressive figure, and with England's second row problems, it would be surprising if he wasn't already somewhere on their radar. The impression he gives is of being level headed, but driven in terms of what he wants to achieve in the game, and his first try for Gloucester which snatched the draw against Worcester, has only served to make him even more of a favourite at Kingsholm.

TODAY'S LINE-UPS



Vs BIARRITZ
SATURDAY 16/1/10
KO 3:00PM

**GLOUCESTER
RUGBY**

Vs

**BIARRITZ
OLYMPIQUE**

OLLY MORGAN

15

FULLBACK

NICOLAS BRUSQUE

JAMES SIMPSON-DANIEL

14

WING

TAKUDZWA NGWENYA

T TIM MOLENAAR

13

CENTRE

ARNAUD MIGNARDI

ELIOTA FUIMAONO-SAPOLU

12

CENTRE

AYOOLA ERINLE

T LESLEY VAINIKOLO

11

WING

BOZAKORO
IAIN BALSHAW

PCPPC NICKY ROBINSON

10

FLY-HALF

CONRADT
JULIEN PEYRELONGUE

RORY LAWSON

9

SCRUM-HALF

YANN LESGOURGUES

ALASDAIR DICKINSON

1

PROP

WORTH
CAMPBELL JOHNSTONE

SCOTT LAWSON

2

HOOKER

TUNNAN
BENOIT-AUGUST

GREG SOMERVILLE

3

PROP

HUGHES
MOSESE-MOATA

DAVE ATTWOOD

4

LOCK

JEROME THION (C)

ALEX BROWN

5

LOCK

CANIZZA
PELU-TAELE

ALASDAIR STROKOSCH

6

FLANKER

MAGNUS LUND

AKAPUSI QERA

7

FLANKER

VAITAFALU
TREVOR HALL

GARETH DELVE (C)

8

NO.8

IMANOL HARINORDOQUY

HEINEKEN CUP: POOL 2

Pos	Team	Pld	Pts
1	Biarritz Olympique	4	16
2	GLOUCESTER RUGBY	4	8
3	Glasgow Warriors	4	4
4	Newport Gwent Dragons	4	4

REPLACEMENTS

GLOUCESTER BENCH

- 16 DARREN DAWIDIUK
- 17 NICK WOOD
- 18 PIERRE CAPDEVIELLE
- 19 ADAM EUSTACE
- 20 LUKE NARRAWAY
- 21 DAVE LEWIS
- 22 FREDDIE BURNS
- 23 TOM VOYCE

BIARRITZ OLYMPIQUE BENCH

- 16 ROMAIN TERRAIN
- 17 EDUARD COETZEE
- 18 REMY HUGHES
- 19 MANUAL CARIZZA
- 20 FLORIAN FAURE
- 21 VALENTIN COURRENT
- 22 LAURENT TRANIER
- 23 JEAN-BAPTISTE GOBELET

THE OFFICIALS

REFEREE:

George Clancy (Ire)

ASSISTANT REFEREES:

David Keane, Darragh McCormack

4TH OFFICIAL:

Peter Huckle

Heineken Cup



FedEx



AMLIN

