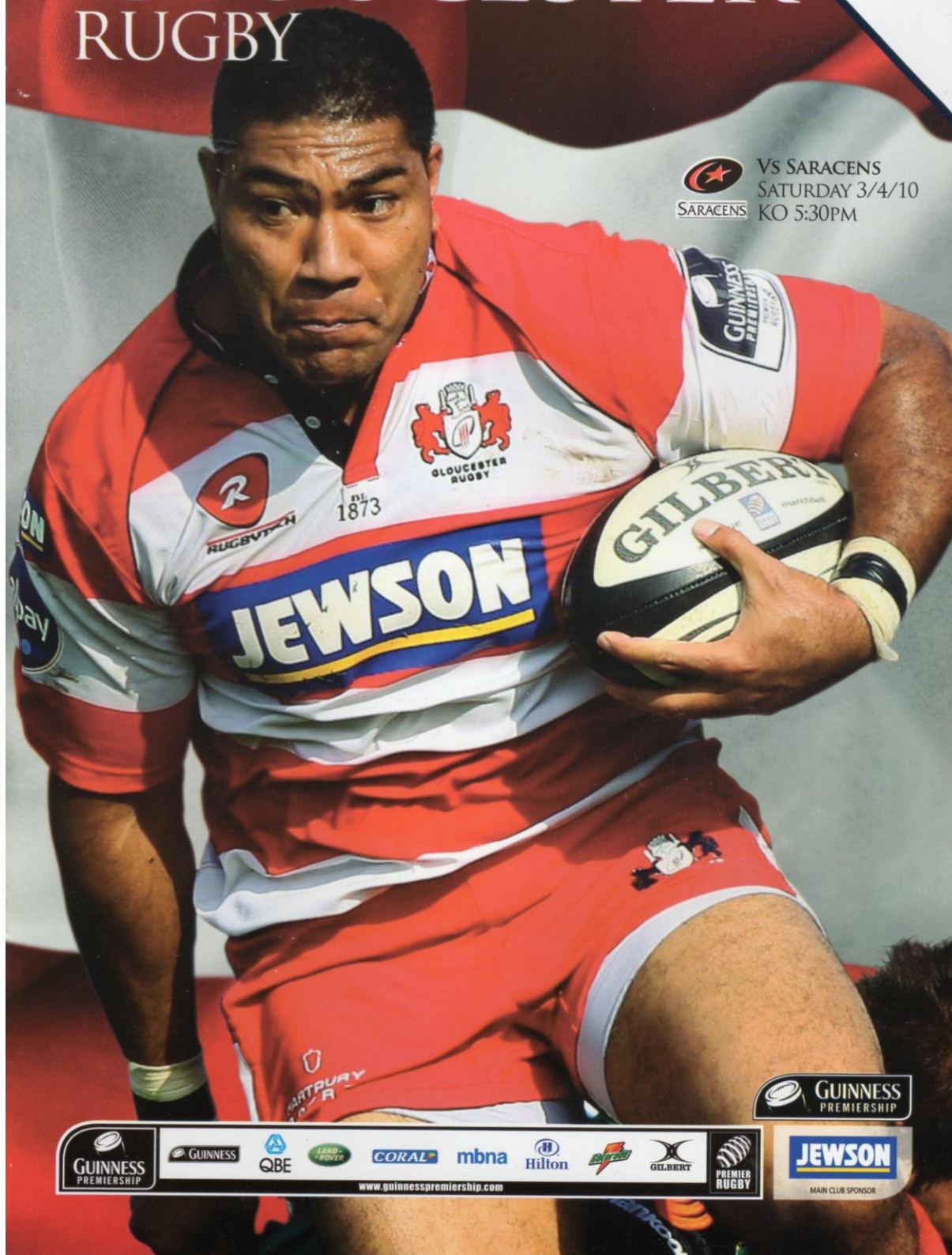


OFFICIAL MATCHDAY PROGRAMME // £3

# GLOUCESTER RUGBY



Vs SARACENS  
SATURDAY 3/4/10  
KO 5:30PM



MAIN CLUB SPONSOR

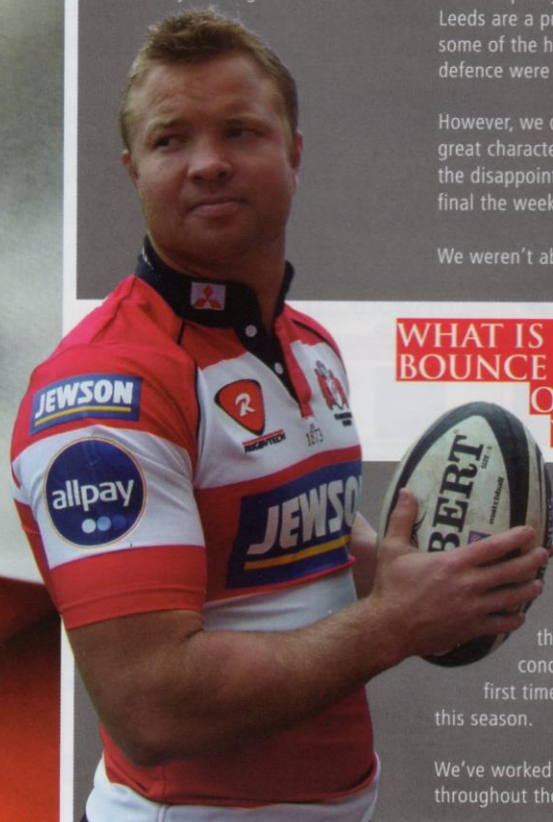
[www.guinnesspremierhip.com](http://www.guinnesspremierhip.com)

# JAKE BOER CAPTAIN'S CORNER

**YOU'LL forgive me for stating the obvious when I say it's been a busy old week at Gloucester Rugby!**

It's one of the funny things about professional rugby that, in some respects, you almost suffer for your success.

A combination of the congested fixture calendar and making the LV= Cup final and quarter final of the Amlin Challenge Cup meant that we had no option other than to play our postponed Guinness Premiership match at Newcastle on Wednesday evening.



This means of course that, when we take the field against Saracens this afternoon, it will have been our third match in the space of eight days.

It's almost exactly the same situation as last year when we finished the season with a Saturday- Tuesday-Saturday schedule having made the final of the EDF Energy Cup as it was known then.

As a result, there may well be some tired bodies out there this afternoon – not that we'll let it show!

A week ago, we got off to a good start with the 19-0 win over Leeds. It was a pretty bruising encounter. Leeds are a pretty physical side and some of the hits put in by them on defence were shuddering.

However, we dug deep and showed great character to bounce back from the disappointment of the LV= Cup final the week before.

We weren't able to run in as many

only conceding nine points in the last three games at home is testimony to that effort.

However, we took a step backwards in our next game, away at the Newcastle Falcons when we put in a performance which we weren't at all proud of.

We're not going to make any excuses about having to travel to Newcastle in midweek. It's a tough enough place to go to when it's a standard weekend game and it's no different on a Wednesday evening.

I guess that having to go there midweek made this week more challenging and, as a squad, we were all incredibly grateful that Tom Walkinshaw made things easier by sorting out flights for us.

Despite that, and the fact that we went into the game in good spirits, we just weren't on our game at Kingston Park and the

**WHAT IS IMPORTANT IS THAT WE BOUNCE BACK TODAY. WE OWE IT TO OURSELVES AND WE OWE IT TO YOU, OUR SUPPORTERS.**

tries as we did in the previous couple of home games but we did a job on the day.

Particularly pleasing was the fact that we didn't concede a single point, the first time we've achieved that fact this season.

We've worked very hard on our defence throughout the season and I think that

Falcons deserve credit for the way they bounced back after conceding more than 50 points at Saracens last weekend.

What is important is that we bounce back today. We owe it to ourselves and we owe it to you, our supporters. We'll certainly be doing our level best to do so.

**Enjoy the game!**

# HEAD TO HEAD

## GLOUCESTER RUGBY V. SARACENS

opta sportsdata



**NICKY ROBINSON**



|       |                    |       |
|-------|--------------------|-------|
| 16    | MATCHES            | 12    |
| 69    | TOTAL TACKLES      | 34    |
| 15    | TOTAL MISSES       | 3     |
| 82.1% | TACKLES MADE %     | 91.9% |
| 78    | TOTAL CARRIES      | 18    |
| 518   | TOTAL METRES       | 77    |
| 464   | TOTAL PASSES       | 207   |
| 11    | CLEAN BREAKS       | 2     |
| 13    | DEFENDER BEATEN    | 6     |
| 8     | OFF LOAD EFFECTIVE | 1     |

**GLEN JACKSON**



**ELIOTA FUIMAONO-SAPOLU**



|       |                 |       |
|-------|-----------------|-------|
| 14    | MATCHES         | 17    |
| 55    | TOTAL TACKLES   | 113   |
| 7     | TOTAL MISSES    | 7     |
| 88.7% | TACKLES MADE %  | 94.2% |
| 77    | TOTAL CARRIES   | 86    |
| 325   | TOTAL METRES    | 173   |
| 94    | TOTAL PASSES    | 83    |
| 6     | CLEAN BREAKS    | 2     |
| 14    | DEFENDER BEATEN | 11    |
| 14    | OFFLOADS        | 7     |

**BRADLEY BARRITT**



**SCOTT LAWSON**



|       |                    |       |
|-------|--------------------|-------|
| 13    | MATCHES            | 17    |
| 45    | TOTAL TACKLES      | 84    |
| 5     | TOTAL MISSES       | 12    |
| 90.0% | TACKLES MADE%      | 87.5% |
| 68    | TOTAL CARRIES      | 95    |
| 105   | TOTAL METRES       | 498   |
| 48    | TOTAL PASSES       | 45    |
| 3     | CLEAN BREAKS       | 10    |
| 7     | OFF LOAD EFFECTIVE | 15    |
| 111   | LINEOUT THROWS WON | 172   |

**SCHALK BRITS**



## GARETH BUTLER VIEW FROM THE CITIZEN

**T**HREE games in a week is one thing, but three games in a week with Newcastle away in the middle is an entirely tougher prospect.

But in laying on a plane to whizz Gloucester up to Newcastle and back on Wednesday, Tom Walkinshaw turned a five hour journey into an hour and probably did more to improve preparations for today's clash with Saracens than he did for the game at Kingston Park.

This was written before the trip to Newcastle so hopefully Gloucester went north and won, but regardless of than a home win at Kingsholm over Saracens is crucial with Guinness Premiership points at stake in the race for sixth place.

Lock Dave Attwood, who was due to make his return in Newcastle,

revealed train and bus were considered until the plane became available, and he knew how important it would be in terms of recovery.

"It will make quite a big difference," he said. "No-one likes a long journey so to be able to get into your home environment soon after the game and chill down and relax and start flushing your body and you mind will make quite a big difference for Saracens.

"It's a really good idea, especially at this stage of the season when there's an awful lot to play for – it could be things like that which make the difference.

"There was talk for a while when we knew the game was going to be rearranged about how we would get up there, whether it would be

flying the day before or a coach journey and things like that. Even the train was mentioned.

"But I think the plane was the best possible solution and now we need to take advantage of it."

Attwood last played before Newcastle in the defeat at Leicester on February 20, quite a spell out for what was originally a turned ankle in training.

After being forced to sit in the stands for more than a month he was raring to go at Kingston Park after feeling the pang of wanting to be out there during the run to the LV= Cup final.

"I'm desperate to get back into things," he said.

"Watching the final it was gutting





to not out there on the field with the boys.

"You feel a bit detached from it so I'm a bit gutted that we lost and aching to get back out there, the same for last weekend (against Leeds).

"It was a nice sunny day and I had a pang to get out there.

"As a club we were massively disappointed with the result over at Worcester in the LV= Cup.

"But there's still plenty to play for for us this season.

"We've got our eyes on Heineken Cup qualification for next year so it's really important we get straight back on the wagon.

"The home game against Leeds was

a good start."

Inside of looking over his shoulder Attwood is looking up the table, knowing only wins will do and that Gloucester cannot worry about what other teams might do, Harlequins in particular.

"It's impossible for us to control what Quins do," he said. "We've got the remaining fixtures for us and we've targeted what points we're going to get and where we're going to get them from.

"We've got to go about that with workmanlike performances."

Meanwhile, head coach Bryan Redpath had a warning for Attwood, who has earned several plaudits during the start of his Gloucester career.

Now that the season is reaching its climax, Redpath said it was the performances now that counted and not those before Christmas.

Should Attwood not rediscover his pre-Christmas form, when he was a shining light in an under-performing XV, it could still go down as a disappointing season for the former Bristol lock.

Redpath said: "Attwood has had a good season so far but memories die pretty quickly so he's got to keep proving himself and improving as a player.

"It's not about the last six months, it's what he does in the next month.

"He'll be remembered far more for that than he will be for the first half of the season."

## BRYAN REDPATH HEAD COACH

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

It's been a hectic few days since I wrote my last column and we've had to manage the squad carefully over the past week.

With the Newcastle game being rearranged for midweek, we've obviously not been able to do the usual weekly programme with a weekend match in mind and have had to adapt accordingly.

Monday was a recovery day which was essential given the hard, physical game that we had against Leeds Carnegie last Saturday and we had a light training day on Tuesday without working the boys too hard.

Wednesday morning saw us fly to Newcastle where we based ourselves at a local hotel for the day before playing the Falcons on the Wednesday evening and flying back to Staverton in the early hours.

Thursday was set aside for injury assessment and recovery with a light team run scheduled for Friday before game day again today.

We're not complaining about it. It's a situation we've been in before and we'll probably face again in the future. The fact is, that any postponed match has



to be rearranged and the busy fixture calendar means that will probably mean a midweek game.

You just have to get your head around it and get on with it. And that means making full use of your squad and acknowledging the fact that you're not going to be able to play the same 23 across all three games.

Hopefully, today we'll be able to welcome back from injury a couple more of the boys who have been missing recently to boost our resources and the casualty list from Leeds and Newcastle won't be too bad.

As I mentioned above, Leeds were a very tough opponent and, to be honest, we expected nothing else.

Like most of the sides that get promoted from the Championship, they took a little while to adjust to the pace of the Guinness Premiership but Neil Back and Andy Key have moulded them into a very effective outfit.

If you look at their recent results, their form is not that of a bottom of the table side. They came into the game against us on the back of two weeks off and they certainly looked up for the game.

They kept it fairly simple and, what they did, they did well. They also defended superbly and made life difficult for us.

I was pleased with our patience and our discipline on the day. We kept to the game plan and eventually wore them down and, just as importantly, we denied them any real scoring opportunities.

That's really important to us. If we can deny the cheap three pointers, then it makes life so much easier for us.

It's something that we have to carry into this afternoon's game against Saracens and that's particularly evident when you look back to the game that we played at their place back in September.

We got off to a pretty good start at Vicarage Road with an early try from Rory Lawson and led for most of the game. However, we couldn't quite shake them off that day because we kept giving Glen Jackson opportunities to kick for goal to keep Saracens in the game and a kicker like that doesn't turn those chances down.

Ultimately, we paid the price because they scored a late try to snatch the game and we left with only a losing bonus point to show for our efforts.

It's an area that we've improved on as the season has gone by. Here at Kingsholm, we only conceded six points against Harlequins, three against Sale and we managed to nil Leeds. We'll have to be similarly disciplined this afternoon.

And that message is even more relevant given the way we slipped to defeat up at Kingston Park on Wednesday evening.

Only days after restricting Leeds' Ceiron Thomas to just one shot at goal, on Wednesday we went to the opposite extreme and gifted Jimmy Gopperth several kickable penalty opportunities and he's way too good a player to pass up such an opportunity.

Gopperth finished with 20 points on the night and you're never going to win in the Premiership if the opposition kicker finishes with that sort of points tally.

At the time of writing these notes, on the way back from Newcastle, it's difficult to put your finger on exactly what went wrong on Wednesday evening.

But we'll do our analysis as best we can given the limited time that we have before today's game and see what we find.

One thing is for sure, however, and that is that we'll be looking to put a few things right this afternoon.

**HOPEFULLY, TODAY WE'LL BE ABLE TO WELCOME BACK FROM INJURY A COUPLE MORE OF THE BOYS WHO HAVE BEEN MISSING RECENTLY TO BOOST OUR RESOURCES AND THE CASUALTY LIST FROM LEEDS AND NEWCASTLE WON'T BE TOO BAD.**



LESLEY VAINIKOLO



## PLAYER PROFILE: LESLEY VAINIKOLO

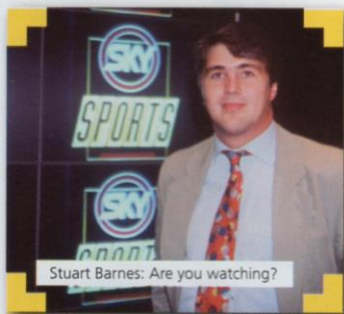
### QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

#### WHAT'S THE FIRST GAME YOU REMEMBER WATCHING?

It would have been back home watching the All Blacks take on Australia in the Bledisloe Cup.

#### WHO IS YOUR SPORT'S BEST PUNDIT?

Probably the guy from The Rugby Club on Sky, Stuart Barnes. He's interesting to listen to.



Stuart Barnes: Are you watching?

#### WHO'S GOT THE FLASHIEST MOTOR AT THE CLUB? EVERYONE SAYS IT'S YOU!

I think a few of the boys are after the title with the Jaguars and cars like that but no-one's touches mine!

#### WHO'S THE BEST DRESSER IN THE PLAYING DEPARTMENT?

That would be Q (Akapusi Qera)

#### IF MONEY WAS NO OBJECT WHAT WOULD YOU BUY?

I'd probably buy a getaway island for myself and the family. Somewhere where we could have our privacy and I could keep them safe and happy.

#### BEST TRY YOU'VE EVER SCORED?

I've scored a few so that's a tough one! I think probably the one when I broke the record in Super League when I scored 37 tries. That was for Bradford against St Helens.



#### WHO'S IMPRESSED YOU DURING THE SIX NATIONS?

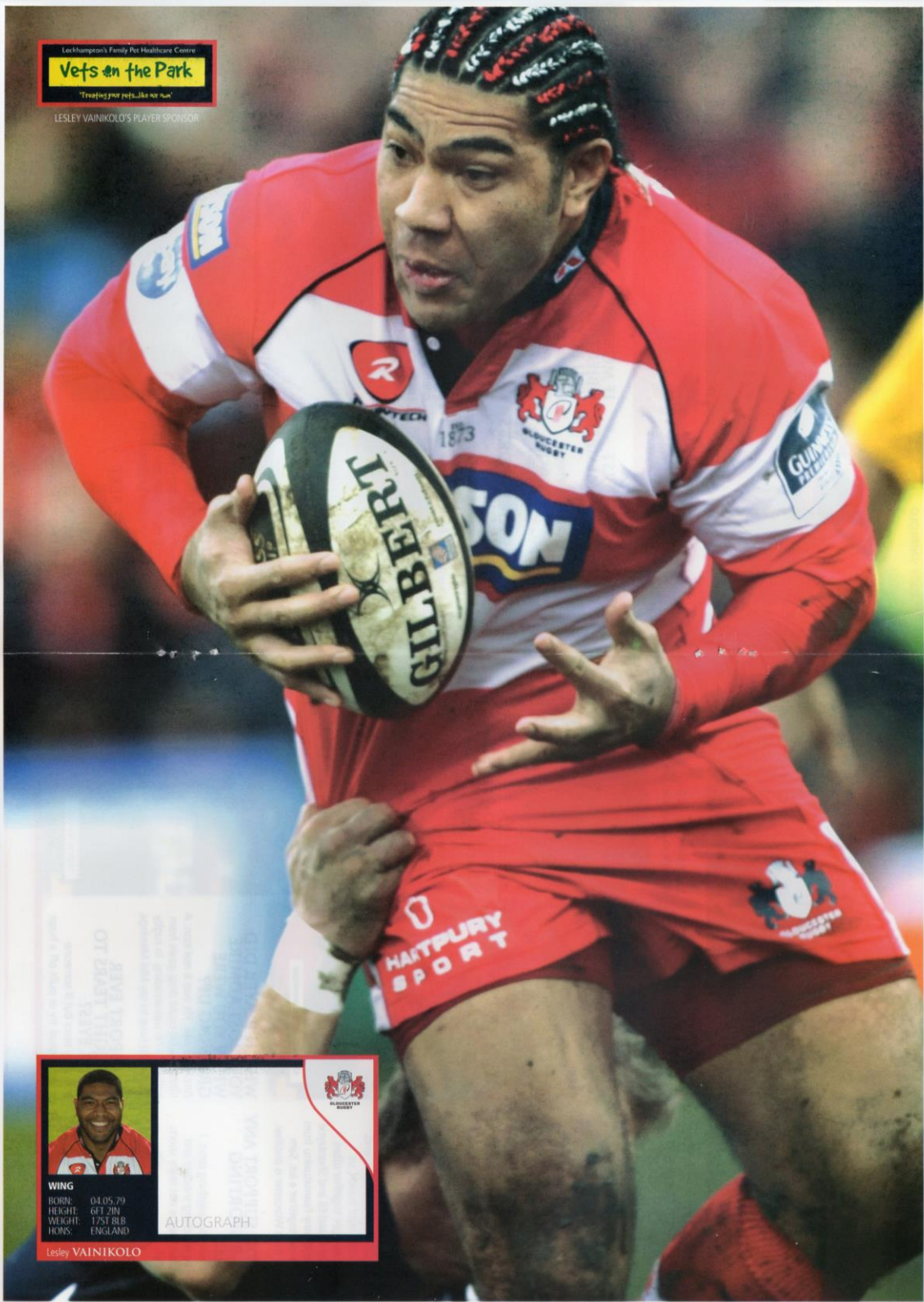
I watched a lot of the Six Nations and I was impressed with the Irish winger, Tommy Bowe. I rated him pretty highly. France were the best team overall. They were strong from 1 to 15 and deserved the title.



Try Time: Big Les in his League days

Leckhampton's Family Pet Healthcare Centre  
**Vets on the Park**  
*"Treating your pet...like no other"*

LESLEY VAINIKOLO'S PLAYER SPONSOR



**WING**  
 BORN: 04.05.79  
 HEIGHT: 6FT 2IN  
 WEIGHT: 175ST 8LB  
 HONS: ENGLAND

AUTOGRAPH

Lesley VAINIKOLO



## PLAYER PROFILE: LESLEY VAINIKOLO

### WHAT'S THE TOUGHEST GAME IN YOUR OPINION – LEAGUE OR UNION?

They're both tough and hard games in their own in their own different ways. In union, you have the rucks and the mauls but in league you have the sheer impact of the tackling.

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

The Volcano which came over from rugby league. There are a few others but I can't reveal them!

### WHO IS YOUR BEST FRIEND IN RUGBY?

I don't really have one best friend. We're a really tight bunch, us Islanders and get together often. People like Q and Eli and Shontayne Hape and Johnny Faamatuainu from Bath. We get together a lot. Sam Tuitupou from Worcester is another.

### DO YOU SUPPORT ANY OTHER SPORTING TEAMS?

I like to relax by watching sport. I really like watching snooker and boxing but they're not team sports obviously!



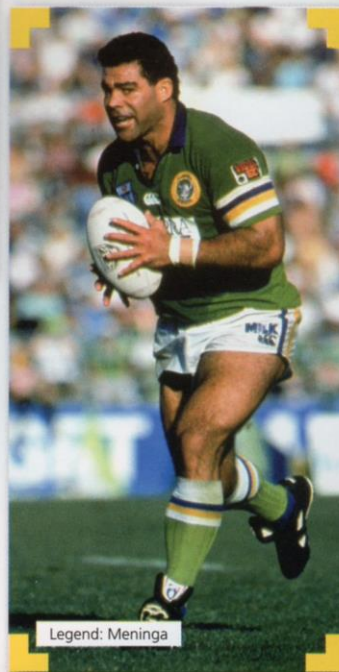
Big Les and Q get emotional

tackle then you do feel emotional. Rugby's an emotional game.



### WHERE IN THE WORLD IS THE BEST NIGHT OUT?

Rome. You can have a real nice night out in Rome.



Legend: Meninga

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

Zinzan Brooke. He was a real icon. A forward who could drop goals from halfway – he was amazing. In rugby league, I'd have to say Mal Meninga.

### HAS SPORT EVER BROUGHT TEARS TO YOUR EYES?

Not really tears but if someone scores a great try or pulls off a huge

# BOB FENTON'S KINGSHOLM NEWS



**THIRD GAME in eight days for our boys makes this a tough day at the office for us against a Saracens side that have been playing their rugby at the right end of the table since the start of the season.**

It's fair to say that the Leeds match was not the best game of rugby we have seen of late. Leeds have managed to grind out a few results and have seen their forwards overpower a few sides to grind out vital wins.

Not so last week and after the game their coach, Neil Back, professed himself to be 'puzzled'

by some of the decisions at scrum time. So were we, mate – we were puzzled how the very aptly named McDonald stayed on the park given that he spent more time face down on the floor than propping.

At the time of writing we have yet to play our midweek game against Newcastle. I just hope that the complete mauling they took on Sunday – and the fact that they will have had one less day to recover – means that by the time you read this we will have another tick in the win column.

So Saracens then... Suffice to say their style this season has not met

with universal approval across the game but it has been effective for them. In fact I've been practicing for this week in readiness for Saracen's particular brand of rugby. I'm sure you know the tune so be prepared to join in when necessary: "If you can't play rugby drop a goal..."

Having said that, I hope everyone here took note of their result last week seven – yes count 'em – seven tries is not something that can be achieved by a side that can't play a bit of rugby.

I know it's fashionable to portray our visitors as a bunch of South

African exiles topping up their pension, but is that really fair? They have as mixed - if a bit bigger- squad as we do with more than a few up and coming English-qualified players among them, including the rather excellent Alex Goode.

I think this bloke is quality and quite how - when full back has been a bit of a problem for the English national side - this bloke does not come into contention (behind our own Olly Morgan, of course) is mystifying. He can do it all, and is most definitely destined for great things.

And unlike his namesake currently playing in South Africa and who is destined for Worcester next season, this particular Goode does not look like he has a season ticket to the pie shop.

For some reason, too, some people seem to have a problem with Saracens marketing activities and the games they play at Wembley. I don't get that - what is wrong with offering cut-price tickets to get more people into a stadium?

Not all of them will go to Vicarage Road for the next home game - and let's be honest, I bet every Saracens official, player and supporter would rather have their own home. But if it persuades a few more people to go to games or play the sport then it has to be a good thing and money well spent.

And who here would not fancy a trip to Wembley to watch Gloucester play a club match? I know I'd be there.

Our visitors today remind me of a particular bugbear of mine: people bringing drums to rugby matches. I can't stand it. Look on this next bit as an audition for the next series of Grumpy Old Men.

Can someone, anyone, tell me

what the constant bashing of drums has to do with anything inside a rugby - no any - sporting environment?

Watching the Six Nations it seems they have now infested Ireland's home matches, making those almost as unwatchable as anything from Watford or Reading. Migraine inducing nonsense that flattens an atmosphere, not builds it.

Wasps are as bad - the minute the opposition support makes any kind of noise, on comes the ear-splitting PA with the tinned cheering and clapping. Nearly as funny as people from Berkshire waving Irish flags and singing 'Ireland's Call' or reading the words to 'Fields Of Athenry' on the big screen at the Mad Stad.

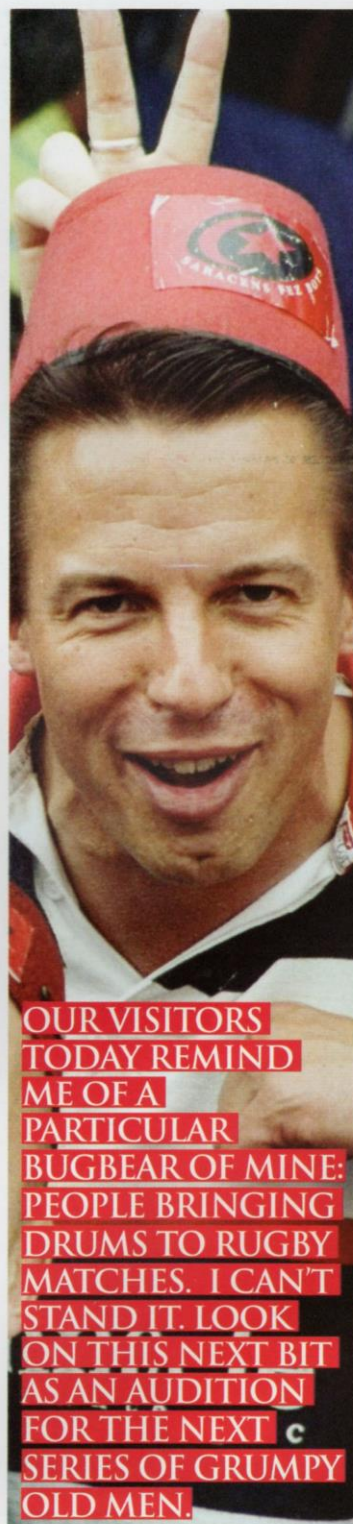
I know, I know not every ground is fortunate enough to have a pitch length terrace like us or Northampton and Leicester. Maybe visitors to other grounds get collective laryngitis on the way in so vocal support is out of the question and it is necessary to use something manufactured in a sound studio. It's definitely not for me, though.

Sad to say I avoid our away trips to Saracens now because of the racket, though I'm rather a dab hand at playing the tuba; maybe I should wander along with a big heap of brass and start knocking out a few tunes. Actually that last bit's a lie, but you get the picture.

God forbid we ever get anything like that here. We need more of an event like we saw up at Sixways, both sets of fans getting behind their sides without a drum in site.

And now having offended pretty much every supporter from every other club, shall I get off my soapbox?

Nurse... My medicine!!!



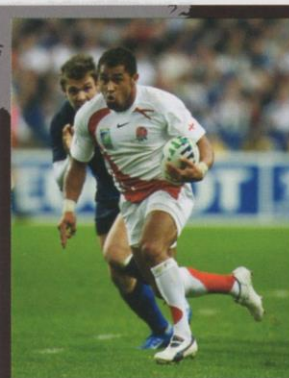
**OUR VISITORS TODAY REMIND ME OF A PARTICULAR BUGBEAR OF MINE: PEOPLE BRINGING DRUMS TO RUGBY MATCHES. I CAN'T STAND IT. LOOK ON THIS NEXT BIT AS AN AUDITION FOR THE NEXT SERIES OF GRUMPY OLD MEN.**

# DAVE KING'S WORLD OF RUGBY

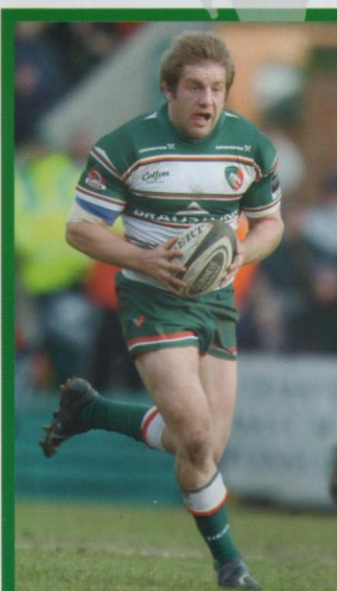
**LEEDS** played their 500th competitive match when they met London Wasps on Sunday 28th February. The Yorkshire club met Havant for their first competitive match in National Division Three.



**FORMER** Gloucester player and coach John Brain has added the role of defensive coach to his repertoire at Championship Club, Bristol. The result is that the Memorial Stadium club has conceded fewer points than any other side in the Championship.



**ON** Friday 26th February a crowd of 10,683 watched the greats of English and Irish rugby contest the Stuart Morgan Cup at The Stoop which raised money for causes including the Matt Hampson Trust. Martin Corry led the English Squad which included Jason Leonard, Jason Robinson and Neil Back. Ireland won the game 17 points to fifteen.

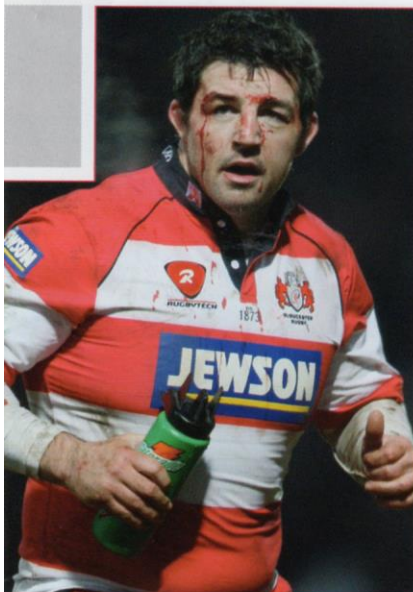


**LEICESTER TIGERS** assistant coach, Ben Herring has a new career as an author. The Kiwi was forced to retire recently with a serious injury. He has now written a children's book called – Boris Balco, which is loosely based on Leicester prop Boris Stankovich.

**NEWSPAPER** conjecture has been linking our former scrum half Clive Stuart-Smith with a move to France! Clive joined Exeter Chiefs in 2007 after spells with Llanelli, Worcester and Leeds. He has also been the subject of interest from Premiership club Harlequins. The London club have signed several Exeter players in previous seasons.

**PAUL SACKKEY** of London Wasps has stated his is bored with playing in this country, hence his move to join a French club. He pointed to the paucity of tries in this season's Premiership. At the time of his comments at the commencement of March, Newcastle Falcons had only registered one try from a wing three-quarter! Perhaps the England winger had a point?





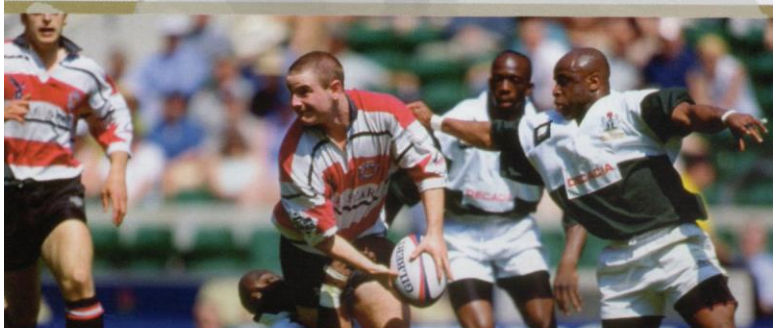
**WITH** the announcement of the Player and Young Player of the Season Awards imminent, time to cast an eye over previous recipients of these awards.

**Player of the Season 01-02** - Ludovic Mercier; **02-03** - Jake Boer; **03-04** - Henry Paul; **04-05** - Adam Balding; **05-06** - Andy Hazell; **06-07** - Andy Hazell; **07-08** - James Simpson-Daniel; **08-09** - Olivier Azam.

**Young Player of the Season 03-04** - Jon Goodridge; **04-05** - Nick Wood; **05-06** - Olly Morgan; **06-07** - Anthony Allen; **07-08** - Ryan Lamb; **08-09** - Olly Morgan.

Interesting to note that no Young Player of the Season has yet gone on to win the Player of the Season. Andy Hazell is the only player to have the Player of the Season twice and in consecutive seasons.

The first player at Kingsholm to receive a Player of the Season award was our former prop forward, Tony Windo. Popularly referred to as 'Reg', he was nominated in 1988. Tony, who is now a coach at Worcester, began his career as an amateur and was a former dental technician.



**SINCE** the advent of professional rugby, London Wasps have completed the double over Gloucester on no fewer than five occasions! Those doubles have occurred as follows: - 1998-99 - 12-13, 9-13; 2000-01 - 3-28, 23-43; 2004-05 - 17-27, 20-33; 2005-06 - 32-37, 25-32; 2009-10 6-35, 19-24. Kingsholm results are first.

When we drew 13-13 with Worcester here at Kingsholm, this was our 10th drawn match since the game went professional. Those drawn matches have been as follows:

|                |                                 |       |
|----------------|---------------------------------|-------|
| <b>1996-97</b> | Bristol (Home) 26th April       | 20-20 |
| <b>1997-98</b> | Sale (Away) 30th December       | 24-24 |
| <b>1998-99</b> | Richmond (Home) 16th January    | 24-24 |
| <b>2002-03</b> | Bath (Away) 28th September      | 21-21 |
|                | Sale (Away) 18th April          | 30-30 |
| <b>2004-05</b> | Newcastle (Away) 22nd February  | 27-27 |
| <b>2005-06</b> | Worcester (Away) 6th April      | 15-15 |
| <b>2006-07</b> | Leicester (Away) 16th September | 27-27 |
|                | Bath (Away) 7th April           | 21-21 |
| <b>2009-10</b> | Worcester (Home) 2nd January    | 13-13 |



**HAVING** prevented Leeds from scoring it was almost a year ago when we last achieved this feat when we defeated Ospreys at the Ricoh Stadium 17-0. The date, 28th March 2009 whereas Leeds was 27th March 2010! Orrell and Bristol are the other two clubs who have failed to register a point at Kingsholm in a league match.

# PETER ARNOLD'S GLOUCESTER TALK

## EGGS, BUNNIES AND BIRKENHEAD PARK

**HOPE you're having a good Easter, everyone. If you are, like me, of a certain age, you'll probably feel a twinge of nostalgia today.**

This was the day when we always used to entertain sides who weren't usually regarded as of sufficient quality to take on Gloucester, but were quite good enough to give us a jolly good holiday run around.

Although we never played them at Easter, Bath would have been regarded in the same light. In fact, they used to play us early in the season as a warm-up for the more serious challenges posed by Bedford (yes, you 'eard me) and Bristol who came along in quick succession thereafter. Today's guests, Saracens would have also

been part of that coterie.

The sides who arrived at Easter were usually from further north. Birkenhead Park were entertained about every other year, as were Headingley, now called Leeds Carnegie, and for whom the great Peter Winterbottom played, and Bill Beaumont's club, Fylde. There were others whose names don't come to mind at the moment, but no doubt someone will remind me.

They weren't really good enough to take us on seriously, but the games served a useful purpose in that they offered an opportunity to give fringe players from the lower ranks of the club a chance to strut their stuff. Many a star of the future got an early chance to pull the first team shirt on at Easter.

I sometimes regret that today's schedule doesn't allow for similar

matches. Everything is so serious and earnest these days that I often think we forget that we are supposed to play the game for fun.

Call me a dinosaur if you like, but remember - they were around for a darned sight longer than humans have been so far.

## THREE IN EIGHT

**SO here we are, facing our third game in eight days. It does seem like a big ask, but some of us remember the days when we always reckoned to play on Saturday afternoons and Wednesday evenings for weeks on end at the beginning and end of every season.**

Quite impossible these days, of course. The intensity of training and of the modern game itself has put paid to any such thoughts.



**HE'S BEEN A GREAT SERVANT FOR GLAWS THIS SEASON, I EXPECT HE'LL MISS THE SHED, AND WE SHOULD ALL WISH HIM WELL IN HIS NEW, LIFE-CHANGING VENTURE. AT LEAST WE WON'T SEE HIM RUNNING AT US NEXT SEASON.**

It was a bit of a blow to lose both Mike Tindall to injury after only six minutes and Gareth Delve later on, in the very first of our demanding triple.

To misquote Lady Bracknell, 'to lose one captain may be unfortunate, to lose both seems like carelessness'.

## HAIL AND FAREWELL

**SPEAKING of which, the new Melbourne set up must have suffered a collective twinge when, given his injury record, their newest acquisition limped off last Saturday.**

I must confess that I was surprised when I heard that Gareth Delve was to head down under in September. I had thought that he was much more likely to go home to Cardiff, avoiding any chance of family homesickness, and enhancing his international career.

I see that he still has ambitions to make the Wales World Cup Squad, even offering to pay his own air fare home to join up for training. However, I can't help but think that his unavailability for next season's Six Nations may well have put the mockers on that.

So why has he grasped the Melbourne option? It's a bit chancy joining a completely new organisation which aims to compete in an extremely demanding competition such as the Super 15: we all know how difficult it is for newly promoted teams to cope with the demands of the Premiership. Facing the same sort of prospect with a side which has never played together before is a much worse proposition.



No doubt they made him a very attractive offer, and given the length of a rugby player's career, the financial aspect can't be discounted. I expect the 'Home and Away' image of Australia was a potent lure, too. All that sea and sunshine.

But Oz has its downside, too, just like anywhere else. Poisonous spiders, king snakes, in fact rather nasty wildlife of all sorts. There are also wildfires and droughts. And how about Christmas in blazing sunshine and plastic money which you can't fold up? We have none of those things in Gloucester.

Still, I mustn't tease Gareth too much. He's been a great servant for Glaws this season, I expect he'll miss the Shed, and we should all wish him well in his new, life-changing venture. At least

we won't see him running at us next season.

All the best, Delvey!

## POETS IN THE SHED?

**LAST week I spent a few words comparing and contrasting the varying merits and techniques of our two very different wingers, James Simpson Daniel and Leslie Vainikolo. Somewhat to my surprise I then received an Email from an anonymous Shedhead which read as follows.**

JSD v. LV

*"Ashes to ashes and dust to dust,  
If Sinbad don't get you,  
Big Les must"*

Quite pithy, I thought. Have a good Bank Holiday.



FINAL

SUNDAY 21ST MARCH 2010 // 15:30 KO // SIXWAYS STADIUM



GLOUCESTER RUGBY 24



NORTHAMPTON SAINTS 30

## COACH'S COMMENTS

*"It is never easy, losing finals. It was a game that could have gone either way."*

*"Nicky Robinson said he'd scored in the second half but that's life. We didn't control possession well enough and there were one or two little errors, but credit to Northampton."*

## KEY MOMENT

Trailing 27-21, Gloucester were seeking to take the lead for the second time in a pulsating second half.

Fly half Nicky Robinson jinked his way inside a would be tackler in an attempt to make the line and appeared to have succeeded.

However, the Northampton back row arrived en masse meaning that referee Alan Lewis was unsighted and had to resort to the TMO. The video footage was inconclusive and Northampton escaped...



**Gloucester's heroic attempt to lift the LV=Cup was denied by a superb performance on the day by the Northampton Saints.**

For the neutral, after some of the dour fare served up in the RBS Six Nations of late, it was an absolute classic.

Both teams set out to play exciting, attacking rugby and the lead changed hands several times. The game was in the balance until the very last minute.

Saints were worthy winners, of that there's no doubt. They've played some of the best rugby in the English top flight this season yet



Gloucester pushed them all the way.

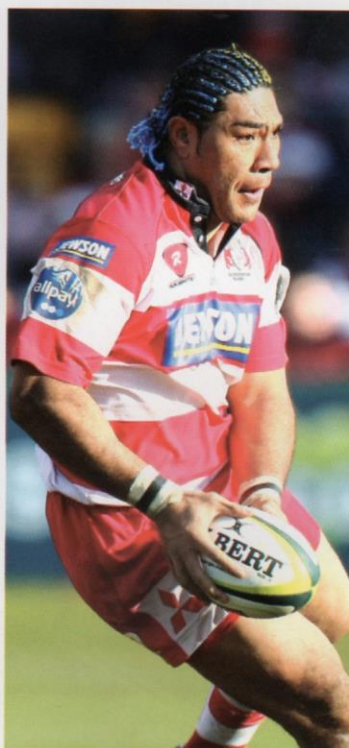
Indeed, had Gloucester had the rub of the green on a few key occasions, the LV= Trophy could well have been making its way to Kingsholm.

Should play have been stopped in the build up to the second Northampton try with Alex Brown seemingly having suffered a serious head injury? Probably.

In the same move, was there a knock on by a Saints player? Probably.

Did Nicky Robinson score? Probably.

**BRYAN REDPATH'S SIDE PUMMELLED  
THE SAINTS FROM THE OFF AND A  
COMBINATION OF NICKY ROBINSON'S  
PLACE KICKING AND AKAPUSI  
QERA'S TRY GAVE GLOUCESTER A 14-6  
ADVANTAGE.**



However, it's all done and dusted and the result is in the book. Yet the frustration remains that it was a game that Gloucester could well have won.

Bryan Redpath's side pummelled the Saints from the off and a combination of Nicky Robinson's place kicking and Akapusi Qera's try gave Gloucester a 14-6 advantage.

With ten minutes to go until the break, Gloucester needed to consolidate but Northampton struck to score two tries and take a 20-14 lead into the interval.

Gloucester's pack rose to the occasion in the second half to

force the penalty try and re take the lead which was immediately relinquished as Northampton hit back.

Still Gloucester came back and hopes were raised as Robinson dived for the line only for them to be dashed by Television Match Official Graham Hughes.

Despite the setback, there was still time for Gloucester to threaten and the Northampton defence was stretched to the limit to keep the Cherry and White clad attackers at bay.

They held out and the rest is history...

**THE TEAMS**

**GLOUCESTER RUGBY**

Burns  
Simpson-Daniel  
Molenaar  
Fuimaono-Sapolu  
Vainikolo  
Robinson  
R. Lawson  
Wood  
Azam  
Capdevielle  
James  
Brown  
Buxton  
Qera  
Eustace

**REPLACEMENTS:**

Voyce for Burns (63), Sharples for Molenaar (41), Lewis for R. Lawson (69), Dawidiuk for Azam (75), Satala for Brown (37), Hazell for Qera (69).

**NOT USED:** Y Thomas, Harden.



**NORTHAMPTON SAINTS**

Geraghty  
Reihana  
Clarke  
Downey  
Diggin  
Myler  
Dickson  
Tonga'uiha  
Sharman  
Mujati  
Lawes  
Kruger  
Dowson  
Best  
Wilson

**REPLACEMENTS:**

Ansbro for Clarke (75), Long for Sharman (62), Easter for Lawes (70).

**NOT USED:** Dreyer, Vickers, Hopley, Dickens, Everitt.



SATURDAY 27TH MARCH 2010 / 15:00 KO

**GLOUCESTER RUGBY 19****LEEDS CARNEGIE 0****COACH'S COMMENTS**

*"It was a decent win and four points against a side which has not lost in five games.*

*"They have been pretty dogged and we knew that would be the case so we had to work to win the game.*

*"Nicky (Robinson) kicked fairly well today and his try was good vision to take the chance. He worked well too."*

**KEY MOMENT**

With first half injury time pending, the Gloucester pack produced a massive scrum and forced their Leeds counterparts to concede a penalty. Nicky Robinson curled home a superb kick to give Gloucester a 9-0 half time lead and a valuable psychological boost.



**Needing to win to continue the push for a top six spot in the Guinness Premiership and automatic Heineken Cup qualification, Gloucester did what they had to do against Leeds Carnegie and safely secured the four points.**

It was a rather more pragmatic performance than the two previous league encounters at Kingsholm which had seen a combined total of 93 points scored.

Indeed, Gloucester had to wait until the 70th minute to finally cross the whitewash after a moment of individual genius from fly half Nicky Robinson who scored all of Gloucester's points on the day.

By that point, Gloucester were already well in control thanks to four penalties from the boot of Robinson but a dogged Leeds outfit made it far from easy, showing the spirit that had helped them climb off the foot of the Guinness Premiership table in recent weeks.

The Headingley based side battled and scrapped for every single piece of possession with the outstanding Hendre Fourie leading the way.

They were also fantastically committed in defence with Seru Rabeni seemingly dead set upon proving a point having almost been a part of this season's Gloucester squad. The Fijian



...THE SIGHT OF JOINT CAPTAINS DELVE AND TINDALL LEAVING THE PITCH WITH INJURIES WAS A CAUSE FOR CONCERN WITH THE GAMES AGAINST NEWCASTLE AND SARACENS TO FOLLOW.



international delivered some shuddering hits on the day – some of them legal, some of them decidedly borderline...

To his credit, Rabeni was also behind Leeds' best attacking opportunity of the game when his sleight of hand took him clear into the 22 but Freddie Burns scythed him down in full flight and the best scoring chance for the visitors was gone.

After a slightly sluggish start, perhaps to be expected after the previous weekend's setback in the LV= Cup Final, Gloucester's pack slowly but surely began to get on top of the Leeds eight and

the penalty opportunities started to follow.

It was slightly frustrating that scoring opportunities were illegally halted by the visitors but, with referee Debney keeping his yellow card in his pocket, Gloucester had to settle for the kicks at goal.

Robinson's try, the result of a measured chip ahead which he gathered himself to score, ensured that the game finished on a high for Gloucester although the sight of joint captains Delve and Tindall leaving the pitch with injuries was a cause for concern with the games against Newcastle and Saracens to follow.

## THE TEAMS

### GLouceSTER RUGBY

Burns  
Simpson-Daniel  
Tindall  
Fuimaono-Sapolu  
Vainikolo  
Robinson  
Lawson  
Wood  
Lawson  
Capdevielle  
James  
Bortolami  
Buxton  
Qera  
Delve

#### REPLACEMENTS:

Azam  
Dickinson  
Harden  
Eustace  
Hazell  
Williams  
Voyce  
Sharples.



### LEEDS CARNEGIE

Hinton  
Fa'afili  
Rabeni  
Barrow  
Blackett  
Thomas  
Mathie  
MacDonald  
Titterrell  
Gomez  
Lund  
Wentzel  
Myall  
Fourie  
Oakley

#### REPLACEMENTS:

Ma'asi  
Hardy  
Swainston  
Clark  
To'oala  
Bedford  
Ford  
Welding.



WEDNESDAY 31 MARCH 2010 / 20:00PM KO



NEWCASTLE FALCONS 25



GLOUCESTER RUGBY 13

## COACH'S COMMENTS

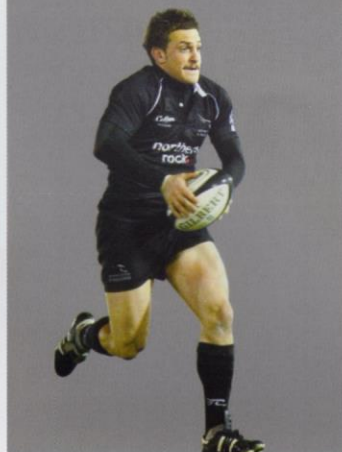
*"The players let themselves down. Newcastle controlled their possession and took their chances, and we made far too many errors."*

*"We coughed the ball up, but Newcastle didn't. At 10-6 it was anyone's game, but we let them get away from us."*

## KEY MOMENT

Gloucester trailed by thirteen points to six at half time and the first score in the second half was always going to be crucial. Had it gone Gloucester's way, it could have given the side the momentum to get back into the game.

However, the Falcons forced a penalty out of the Gloucester defence in the opening couple of minutes and the vital psychological blow went the way of the home side.



**Gloucester were caught cold on a freezing night in Newcastle as the Falcons, desperate to pull away from the relegation scrap at the foot of the Guinness Premiership table, did their survival prospects the world of good.**

In a week when British Summer Time was ushered in, the only hint of summer at a near Baltic Kingston Park was when the BBC Radio Newcastle team passed around slices of a cake sent in by one of their listeners. It was like a sub zero Test Match Special!

Matters were distinctly hotter on

the pitch in the heat of battle and it was the Falcons who were on the boil.

Gloucester did have chances in the opening quarter. Simpson-Daniel hacked a loose ball into the home 22 but the bounce eluded both himself and Eliota Fuimaono-Sapolu.

Neat build up play also created two half chances on the right. One was spurned due to a misguided pass under pressure and the other was snuffed out when the Falcons defence bundled the ball carrier into touch.



**GLOUCESTER DID HAVE CHANCES IN THE OPENING QUARTER. SIMPSON-DANIEL HACKED A LOOSE BALL INTO THE HOME 22 BUT THE BOUNCE ELUDED BOTH HIMSELF AND ELIOTA FUIMAONO-SAPOLU.**



On the other hand, the home side ruthlessly exploited the one real opening that came their way. A turnover on halfway gave Tane Tu'ipulotu a chance to counter and he broke Freddie Burns' tackle before putting Tom Biggs in for the score.

Aside from that, despite Newcastle enjoying the lion's share of possession, they didn't really threaten. They didn't have to, as Gloucester conceded penalties on a regular basis and fly half Jimmy Gopperth happily accumulated the points.

Gloucester's error count will have made watching the match DVD uncomfortable viewing but they did

capitalise on a rare mistake from the home side and Tim Taylor's try near the hour mark gave brief hope of a comeback.

It proved to be a false dawn as Gopperth added two further penalties in the final quarter to quash those Gloucester hopes and steer Newcastle to the win.

Come the final whistle, Newcastle celebrated long and hard knowing that they had eased their relegation worries.

Gloucester, however, knew that making the top 6 had just been made that bit harder.

## THE TEAMS

### NEWCASTLE FALCONS

A. Tait  
Williams  
Bobo  
Tu'ipulotu  
Biggs  
Gopperth  
Young  
Golding  
Vickers  
Hayman  
Levi  
Sorenson  
B. Wilson  
Williamson  
Afu

#### REPLACEMENTS:

Vickerman for Bobo (72), Shiels for Golding (79), Walker for Vickers (75), Swinson for Levi (48), Hudson for Sorenson (55).

**NOT USED:** Ovens, Pilgrim, Catterick.



### GLOUCESTER RUGBY

Burns  
Sharples  
Simpson-Daniel  
Fuimaono-Sapolu  
Vainikolo  
Robinson  
R. Lawson  
Wood  
S. Lawson  
Capdevielle  
Attwood  
Brown  
Buxton  
Qera  
Eustace

#### REPLACEMENTS:

Taylor for Burns (36), May for Simpson-Daniel (72), A. Williams for R. Lawson (61), Dickinson for Wood (41), Dawidiuk for S. Lawson (69), Harden for Capdevielle (69), Bortolami for Brown (65), Satala for Buxton (51).

# TODAY'S LINE-UPS



VS SARACENS  
SATURDAY 3/4/10  
KO 5:30PM

**GLOUCESTER  
RUGBY**

VS **SARACENS**

**GUINNESS  
PREMIERSHIP**



*ppc pcp*  
*Andrews* OLLY-MORGAN

*SARACENS TT*  
SEMITADULALA

*SARACENS* JONNY-MAY

TIM MOLENAAR

*VANIKOLO* TOM VOYCE

TIM TAYLOR

ANDY WILLIAMS

ALASDAIR DICKINSON

OLIVIER AZAM

PAUL DORAN-JONES

WILL JAMES

*ROBINSON* ALEX-BROWN

JAKE BOER (C)

*SARACENS* ANDREW HAZELL

*CHANCE* APO SATALA

**15**  
FULLBACK

ALEX GOODE *T*

**14**  
WING

RODD PENNEY

**13**  
CENTRE

ADAM POWELL

**12**  
CENTRE

BRAD BARRITT *T*

**11**  
WING

NOAH CATO *T LYLES*

**10**  
FLY-HALF

GLEN JACKSON *pcp*

**9**  
SCRUM-HALF

NEIL DE KOCK

**1**  
PROP

RHYS GILL

**2**  
HOOKER

SCHALK BRITS

**3**  
PROP

PETRUS DU PLESSIS

**4**  
LOCK

HUGH VYVYAN

**5**  
LOCK

MOURITZ BOTHA

**6**  
FLANKER

JACQUES BURGER

**7**  
FLANKER

ANDY SAULL

**8**  
NO.8

ERNST JOUBERT (C)

| Team                | P  | W  | D | L  | F   | A   | BP | PTS |
|---------------------|----|----|---|----|-----|-----|----|-----|
| 1 Leicester         | 18 | 12 | 1 | 5  | 404 | 244 | 8  | 58  |
| 2 Northampton       | 17 | 13 | 0 | 4  | 342 | 236 | 4  | 56  |
| 3 Saracens          | 17 | 11 | 1 | 5  | 325 | 251 | 5  | 51  |
| 4 London Irish      | 17 | 9  | 3 | 5  | 384 | 250 | 6  | 48  |
| 5 Wasps             | 18 | 10 | 0 | 8  | 293 | 301 | 4  | 44  |
| 6 Bath              | 17 | 8  | 2 | 7  | 301 | 266 | 6  | 42  |
| 7 <b>GLOUCESTER</b> | 18 | 7  | 1 | 10 | 361 | 349 | 6  | 36  |
| 8 Harlequins        | 17 | 6  | 2 | 9  | 276 | 362 | 4  | 32  |
| 9 Newcastle         | 18 | 5  | 4 | 9  | 245 | 322 | 4  | 32  |
| 10 Sale             | 17 | 5  | 1 | 11 | 232 | 361 | 5  | 27  |
| 11 Leeds Carnegie   | 17 | 5  | 1 | 11 | 227 | 371 | 5  | 27  |
| 12 Worcester        | 17 | 3  | 4 | 10 | 244 | 321 | 5  | 25  |

## TOP POINTS SCORERS: 2009-2010

|     |                       |                    |
|-----|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 163 | Willie Walker         | Worcester Warriors |
| 152 | Jimmy Gopperth        | Newcastle Falcons  |
| 150 | <b>Nicky Robinson</b> | Gloucester Rugby   |

## TOP TRY SCORERS: 2009-2010

|    |                       |                    |
|----|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 12 | Chris Ashton          | Northampton Saints |
| 7  | <b>James S-Daniel</b> | Gloucester Rugby   |
| 6  | Matt Banahan          | Bath Rugby         |

## TOP PENALTY KICKERS: 2009-2010

|    |                 |                    |
|----|-----------------|--------------------|
| 42 | Willie Walker   | Worcester Warriors |
| 40 | Jimmy Gopperth  | Newcastle Falcons  |
| 35 | Jeremy Staunton | Leicester Tigers   |

## MOST APPEARANCES : 2008-2009

|    |                  |              |
|----|------------------|--------------|
| 24 | Chris Hala'ufia  | London Irish |
| 24 | Richard Thorpe   | London Irish |
| 23 | Steffon Armitage | London Irish |

## REPLACEMENTS

- 16 SCOTT LAWSON
- 17 NICK WOOD
- 18 PIERRE CAPDEVIELLE
- 19 DAVE ATTWOOD
- 20 PETER BUXTON
- 21 RORY LAWSON
- 22 NICKY ROBINSON
- 23 CHARLIE SHARPLES

- 16 FABIO ONGARO
- 17 MATIAS AGUERO
- 18 RICHARD SKUSE
- 19 TOM RYDER
- 20 JUSTIN MELCK
- 21 MOSES RAULUNI
- 22 DERICK HOUGAARD *pc*
- 23 RICHARD HAUGHTON

## THE OFFICIALS

**REFEREE:**  
David Pearson  
**ASSISTANT REFEREES:**  
Paul Dix and Roy Maybank  
**4TH OFFICIAL:**  
Mark Tovey