

GLOUCESTER RUGBY

OFFICIAL MATCHDAY PROGRAMME // £3



VS LONDON IRISH
SATURDAY 24/4/10
KO 3:00PM



www.guinnesspremiership.com

MIKE TINDALL CAPTAIN'S CORNER

AFTER a couple of weeks on the road, it's good to be back at Kingsholm this afternoon to take on London Irish.

I'm stating the obvious when I say that we've had a couple of disappointing results since we defeated Saracens here three weeks ago.

Both of those games, the Amlin Challenge Cup quarter final at London Wasps and the Guinness Premiership fixture at Northampton Saints, can be summed up as frustrating.

Both matches saw us play some genuinely good rugby. Adams Park and Franklin's Gardens are two very difficult places to go to and we certainly weren't overawed on either occasion.

We enjoyed good possession, played plenty of rugby and scored a reasonable number of points in attack.

well aware of that.

We can point to the fact that we've had a lot of injuries which have deprived us of the services of key players for long periods. But, in all honesty, that's the case for a lot of sides. Ultimately, you're responsible for your own destiny and we'll work hard in the off season to improve ourselves.

But, we're not done just yet! We've still got two very tough fixtures to round off the Guinness Premiership starting today with our visitors, London Irish.

Recent seasons have seen some feisty old encounters between the two sides and I'm sure that no one will be taking a backward step this afternoon!

The Exiles will have been disappointed to slip to a home defeat to Leeds last weekend and I don't mean to do the Headingley outfit any disservice when I say that.

but a huge factor is the support we receive here. Times have been tough over the past couple of seasons for a lot of people but we continue to receive excellent, vocal support here at home and it's always appreciated by myself and the players.

On behalf of myself and the players, thank you for that support and we'll be digging deep to try and sign off in style this afternoon.

Enjoy the game!

I SUPPOSE IT SUMS UP OUR OVERALL SEASON. WE'VE ENJOYED SOME EXCELLENT WINS BUT WE'VE LOST SOME MATCHES WE CERTAINLY SHOULD HAVE WON AND WE'RE WELL AWARE OF THAT.

However, we were undone in both those defeats by our work in defence. It may have been great entertainment for the neutrals but we'd probably rather dog out a 6-3 win and come away with the points.

I suppose it sums up our overall season. We've enjoyed some excellent wins but we've lost some matches we certainly should have won and we're

The result means that Irish have slipped out of the top four places and they'll be pulling out all the stops to make amends this afternoon.

We're aware of that but we'll be in no mood to make life easy for them. One characteristic of our season is that our home form has been much more impressive than our form away from Kingsholm.

There are many reasons for that



GARETH BUTLER VIEW FROM THE CITIZEN

JUST last season Gloucester centre Jonny May was plying his trade for Hartpury College in South West Two.

He did it quite successfully – scoring a hat-trick at Twickenham in the EDF Senior Vase final – but few could have predicted his rise to prominence since then which he celebrated by signing a new contract this week.

In the last two weeks he has come into the Gloucester first team and more than held his own against the likes of Wasps and Northampton.

The 20-year-old could have scored a few tries in the process but for the bounce of the egg-shaped ball on the hard ground, scuppering opportunities in both games.

"That's just how it goes," he said. "With the hard ground the ball is going to bounce everywhere, but hopefully it will come.

"It was a big test and a big shock

to be called into it at such late notice but I feel I've come out of it the other end really quite well.

"It's promising for me because I've still got things to work on but it shows I've got potential and can push on to be around the first team more this season and from the start of next."

May is well aware of the strides he has taken in the last 12 months, probably aided by the cut backs on the playing front at Gloucester.

He has been playing at Moseley most of the season and knows the levels are hardly worth comparing.

"That was a good day at Twickenham in the sunshine last year," he said. "The difference between the two is with Hartpury I won't really be challenged defensively.

"Those teams are quite old men. They keep it tight, they scrummage and they drive.

"It has been a big shock this year

stepping up to the Championship with Moseley with teams throwing it about a bit. It has really tested me.

"But also the fact that I've got quite a lot of pace and will glide through quite easily in the lower leagues.

"I still challenge people on the outside to an extent at this level but I've got to be a bit more aware of giving people like Sinbad and Vainikolo their one on ones instead of going myself."

And on signing a new one-year deal? "It gives me some security," he said "I want to stay at Gloucester, I'm really happy here.

"I've got an opportunity to work on the things I need to and hopefully get in the first team a bit more and keep doing what I'm doing."

Something May finds easy under head coach Bryan Redpath.

"He's really honest with me and easy to approach," he said. "He tells me what I need to work on





and what I'm doing well. I've got plenty to work on still and lots to gain. It's promising."

Just this week May also received the news he would be flying to Argentina this summer to take part in the Under-20s World Championships.

He will be joined by Freddie Burns and Shaun Knight in South America, with Pasqualin and Danny Wright missing out from those who took part in this season's Under-20s Six Nations.

May revealed he did not expect to be included after a disappointing end to his previous outing for his country against Ireland at Kingsholm.

He said: "I was feeling pretty sorry for myself after the Ireland game and I wasn't involved in the last two games of the Six Nations.

"But I was involved in a Moseley

win against Bristol and I had a couple of good A League games.

"Then I was called into the first team and, coming out of that okay, I feel I deserve my place on the plane and am ready for the challenge."

For May his England Under-20s caps were his first in any kind of representative rugby.

He feels moving to Hartpury was a huge step in his rugby development.

"I played my junior rugby at Wootton Bassett but didn't get into the county under-16s or under-18s," he said.

"Then all of a sudden I'm in the England Under-20s and I'm playing first team rugby from just playing South West Two with Hartpury last year.

"Hartpury was great for me. I didn't realise coming into Gloucester how big a rugby culture there is. It is really driven, there is

a lot of talent and the quality of player you're around pushes you to improve.

"I want to keep stepping up the levels and I've met them so far there's no reason why I can't."

But May still has to pinch himself after making his Gloucester debut in a pre-season game alongside Carlos Spencer, and forming a centre partnership with Mike Tindall for the last two weeks.

"People like Mike and Sinbad I was watching on TV when I was 13," he said.

"Tins is probably one of the wisest men ever so you can't really go wrong playing outside him.

"Earlier on my first pre-season game was playing with Carlos Spencer in the centre as well. It's been a dream this year playing with those guys.

"At the moment I'm like a sponge absorbing everything and learning so much."

BRYAN REDPATH HEAD COACH

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

Talking to the folks that work in the offices at the stadium this week, it sounds as though both ticket sales and corporate sales have gone well for this game so it looks as though our last home game of the Guinness Premiership season will be quite some occasion.

Since I last wrote my programme notes, we've had some highs and we've had some lows which has pretty much been the story of our season so far I guess.

Our last home game, against Saracens, showed that we can mix it with the very best in the Guinness Premiership although it was a pretty close run thing at 29-28!

Brendan Venter's men have started to play some decent rugby in recent weeks after relying heavily on the boot in the opening few months of the season and it made for a good game.

I was delighted with the attitude and effort put in by the players considering it was our third game in a week and came almost immediately following the long trip north to Newcastle although there were some aspects of our defensive work which could have been better.



And that's something that has continued in our next two games which were both away from Kingsholm at London Wasps in the Amlin Challenge Cup quarter final and at Northampton Saints in the Guinness Premiership.

In both those games, we played a lot of good rugby and scored probably enough points to have

won the games if we'd been solid defensively.

Some of our defensive issues have been because we've had to use a lot of different combinations of players due to injuries in recent times and some of it is simply down to individual errors. However, it does need to be addressed and we've been working on it this week.

London Irish this afternoon will be a tough challenge. Under the past couple of seasons under Toby Booth they've been one of the top sides in the country and came within a whisker of winning the whole thing last season.

They lost at home to Leeds last weekend but still have top four aspirations so they'll be coming here today with an awful lot to play for as they'll be desperate to get back into the semi final qualifying places.

But we've got plenty of motivation ourselves. Despite the defeat at Northampton last weekend, we're still in with a shout of clinching seventh place in the Guinness Premiership although we'll need things to go our way elsewhere.

That won't stop us giving it everything and, of course, we're always lifted when we play at home in front of our own supporters.

There's a lot written about home advantage but I think the proof is in the pudding when you consider that our last home defeat in the Premiership was against London Wasps back in October.

I know I'm speaking on behalf of the whole squad when I say that it's important for us to sign off in style here today.

I guess now it's appropriate for me to finish off with a few words about this season and look ahead to 2010-11.

As I said earlier, we've experienced some highs and lows this season.

We kicked off with a good win over Bath, entertained Australia

on a memorable November evening, overturned the odds to defeat Leicester and ran in a hatful of tries against the likes of Harlequins and Sale.

We also kept our European hopes alive with a fine victory in Newport and came so close to lifting the LV= Cup at Worcester a few weeks ago.

There have been some tough moments, however, I think that we're in good shape to move forward next season.

We had massive player turnover last summer and that's why we've worked so hard to try and keep the nucleus of the squad together for next season. There will be some new faces to integrate but the squad won't have undergone major surgery.

We've had more than our fair share of injuries this season which has meant that we've missed some key players at times but that has allowed some of young players to come in and flourish.

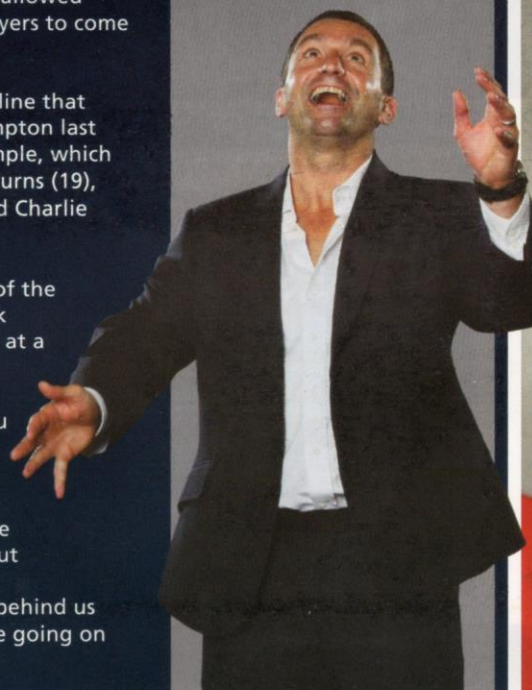
Consider the back line that started at Northampton last weekend, for example, which featured Freddie Burns (19), Jonny May (20) and Charlie Sharples (20).

They're just some of the reasons that I think that we're looking at a bright future.

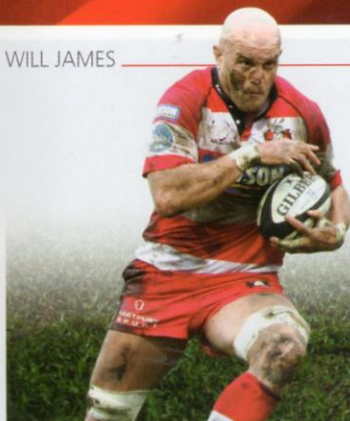
Finally, a thank you from myself.

Thank you for the support that you've given us throughout the season and for continuing to get behind us however things are going on the pitch.

TALKING TO THE FOLKS THAT WORK IN THE OFFICES AT THE STADIUM THIS WEEK, IT SOUNDS AS THOUGH BOTH TICKET SALES AND CORPORATE SALES HAVE GONE WELL FOR THIS GAME SO IT LOOKS AS THOUGH OUR LAST HOME GAME OF THE GUINNESS PREMIERSHIP SEASON WILL BE QUITE SOME OCCASION.



WILL JAMES

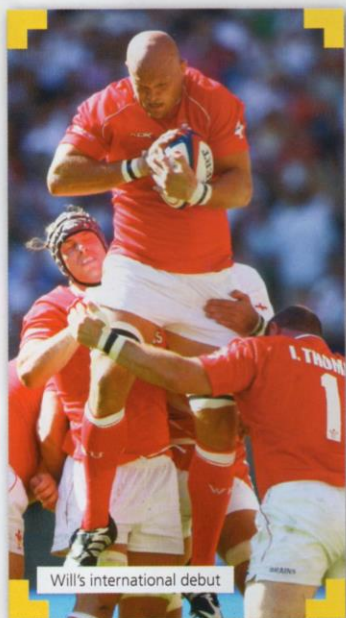


PLAYER PROFILE: WILL JAMES

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

WHAT'S THE FIRST GAME YOU REMEMBER WATCHING?

That's a tough one to begin with! I can't really remember to be honest. I think it was an England vs Wales game in about 1987.



Will's international debut

WHO IS YOUR SPORT'S BEST PUNDIT?

Will Greenwood, definitely. I know a few of the other boys have chosen him but he talks a lot of sense given his recent playing background.



The Jaguar X5: as driven by Dai and Brushy

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

Nicky Robinson has just got rid of his Golf and taken delivery of a new Jaguar X5 which is pretty nice. Brush has got one as well.

WHO'S THE BEST DRESSER IN THE PLAYING DEPARTMENT?

It has to be Peter Buxton after his wife bought him a personal shopper session down at Cabot Circus in Bristol.

The worst is Dave Attwood. He's just bought a pair of Timberland boots which are so big that the box they came in is the size of a small house.

IF MONEY WAS NO OBJECT WHAT

WOULD YOU BUY?

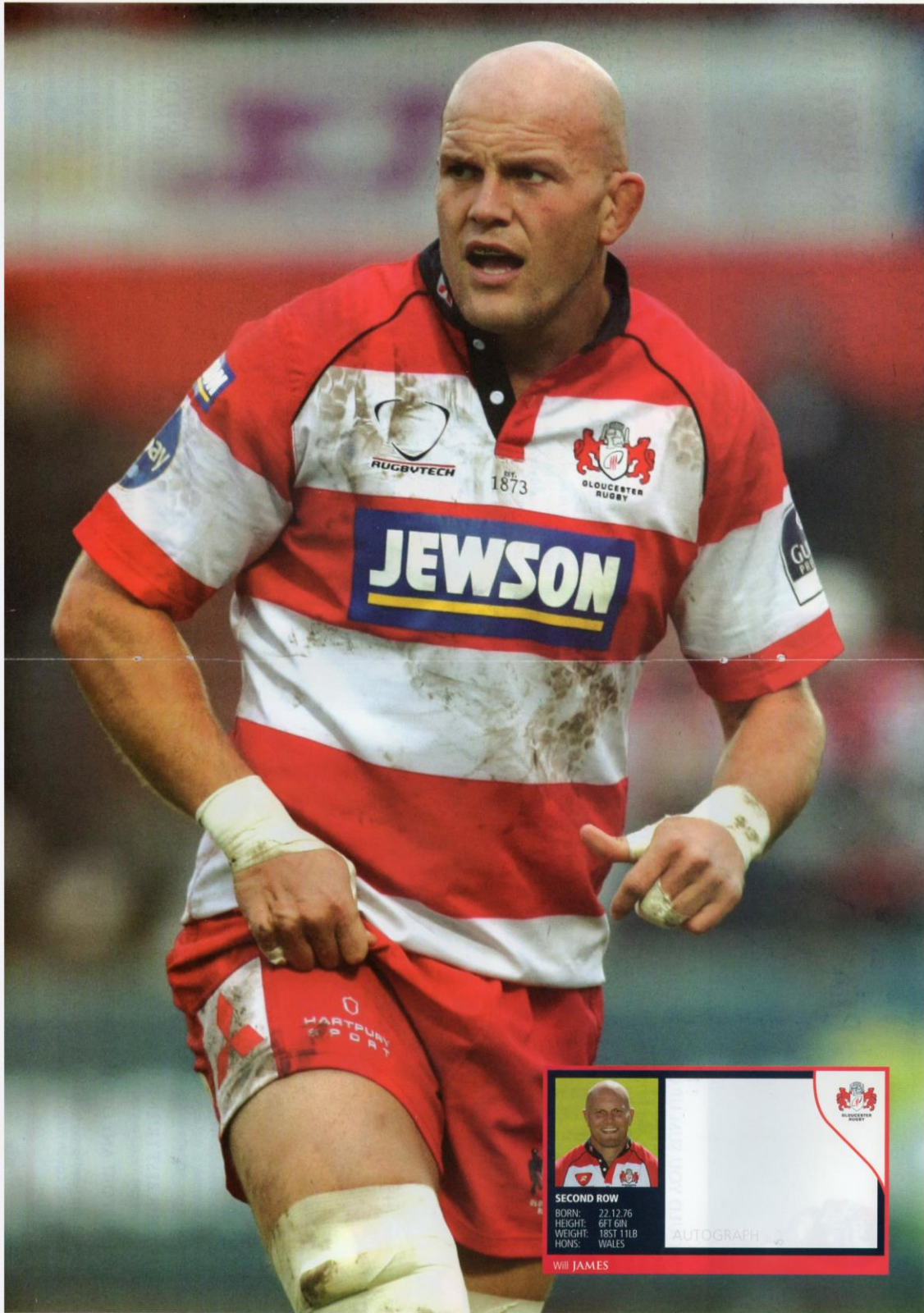
I would buy a fantastic house somewhere in South Devon probably.

MOST MEMORABLE GAME YOU'VE EVER PLAYED IN?

The most memorable would be when I won my first cap for Wales against England at Twickenham although we went on to lose the game quite heavily so it wasn't the most enjoyable!

WHICH PLAYER AND TEAM IMPRESSED YOU MOST DURING THE SIX NATIONS?

France impressed me most as a team and I thought their stand out player was the scrum half Morgan Parra. I thought he played with great attitude and anyone who can keep Dimitri Yachvili out of the side must be a pretty good player.



SECOND ROW
BORN: 22.12.76
HEIGHT: 6FT 6IN
WEIGHT: 18ST 11LB
HONS: WALES

Will JAMES



WILL JAMES



PLAYER PROFILE: WILL JAMES

HOW WOULD YOU SUM UP GLOUCESTER'S SEASON IN ONE SENTENCE?

That's even tougher than the first question! We've had some highs and lows but we've got a good foundation upon which to build for next season.



Ready to push on next season

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

My nickname is Mr Grills because I've supplied a few barbecues to people. What you have to remember is, that with Andy Hazell around, you're liable to get landed with a new nickname on a regular basis!

WHO IS YOUR BEST FRIEND IN RUGBY?

I don't really have one best friend, I'm good friends with a lot of people.

DO YOU SUPPORT ANY OTHER SPORTING TEAMS?

I follow the teams that I used to play for so I keep an eye out for Plymouth Albion and the Cornish Pirates. I still have quite a few friends at both those clubs.

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

Jonathan Davies I think. An incredibly skilful player although I'm not sure how he'd fit into the modern game. He'd probably do ok though!

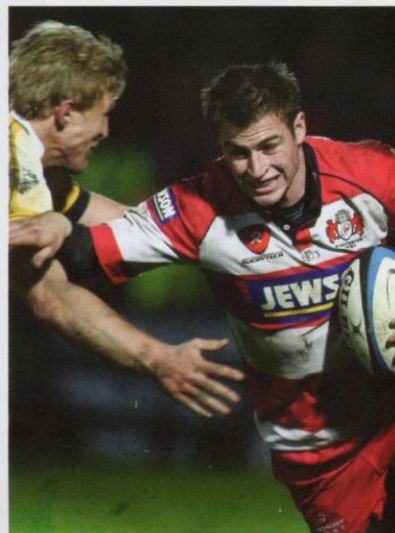
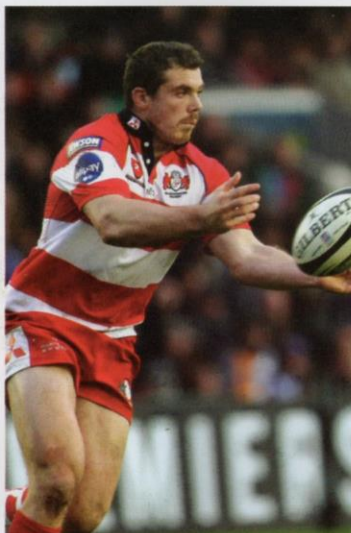
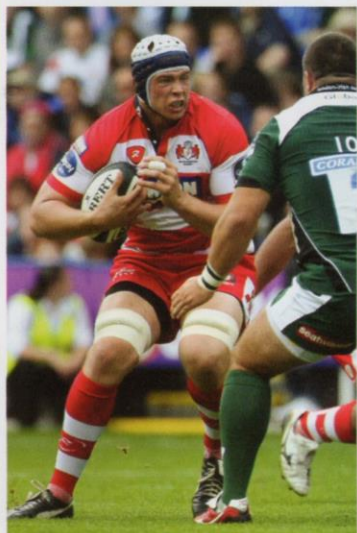


Ah-ha! Jonathan Davies

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS THE BEST NIGHT OUT?

New York.

BOB FENTON'S KINGSHOLM NEWS



SO here we are then, last home game of the season, and what a season it has been too.

I guess it's fair to say that it has not been the success we had hoped for. On the whole more lows than highs and it looks pretty certain that there will be no Heineken Cup rugby for us next season.

Being someone who's glass is usually more half full than half empty though, I am obliged to find a few positives. And there are some.

The emergence of the precocious talent that is Freddie Burns for one – a guaranteed star in the making – the way Tim Molenaar and Dave Attwood made the transition into the Premiership and made a positive impact.

Watching Jonny May make a terrific break at Welford Road and thinking '...Hello, here's another gem in the making...' and watching make-shift sides pull together to

get unexpected results. And there were plenty of others too. And did I mention Sir Ian being on board?

We shouldn't lose sight of the impact injuries have had on our side. Some players have spent longer on the sidelines than on the playing surface – the old joke about the medical room resembling a scene from Casualty applies.

But it could be so much worse – we could be in the position of Worcester or Leeds – who'd fancy being a supporter of either of those clubs tomorrow? We could be going up to Sixways next week to play them in their last game in the Premiership for a while.

I know some people will be very happy at that prospect, but I must admit having another local match on the calendar makes the travelling a bit easier.

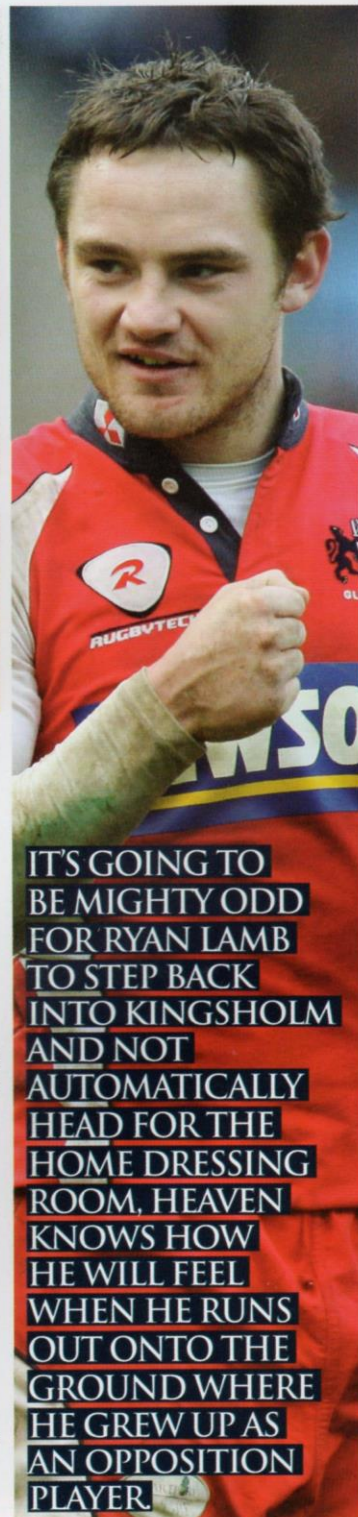
But let's concern ourselves with matters closer to home, and London Irish. Their result last weekend

saw them slip out of the top four so they will be going out all guns blazing for a result today. Similarly we will want to end the season on a bit of a high with a home win, so today promises to be a cracker.

Correct me if I'm wrong, but didn't some guy who used to play at Kingsholm make the move to the Mad Stad a while ago? Yeah – Peter Richards, that was him...

It's going to be mighty odd for Ryan Lamb to step back into Kingsholm and not automatically head for the home dressing room, heaven knows how he will feel when he runs out onto the ground where he grew up as an opposition player.

He'll be expecting to receive a whole heap of stick, and I'm absolutely certain that he will get it too, but hopefully more in the humorous category than abusive. Those with long memories will recall watching him make his way through the Academy set up, into the 'A' team



and finally into the full squad.

Lamby was – and still is for that matter – a very special player, he'll do things other players just never expect – like the time he chinned Shane Drahm right in front of the posts at the Worcester Street end. Poor old Shane thought he could push this little kid around and soon learned the error of his ways!

Although his Gloucester career ended in a way that no one would have wanted he still deserves our respect - I have far more positive than negative memories of him in a Gloucester shirt. Having said all that I hope he has one of those days when he can't hit a cow's backside with a banjo, let alone land a kick at goal.

I can't let the last programme go without commenting on the Help For Heroes charity match that took place last weekend. Unless you have been living on Mars for a few weeks you couldn't help but notice that the motley crew that

make up The Shedweb Lions staged a match against the Cherry Pickers – the GRFC veterans side – at Widden RFC.

At the time of writing I don't know the exact amount raised, but on the day, and with donations on the web and sales of shirts we must be close to £1,500 which is a fantastic effort. The Pickers ran out winners by about six tries to three, all three scored by our smooth, debonair and tremendously skilful (another tenner you owe me OT) outside half.

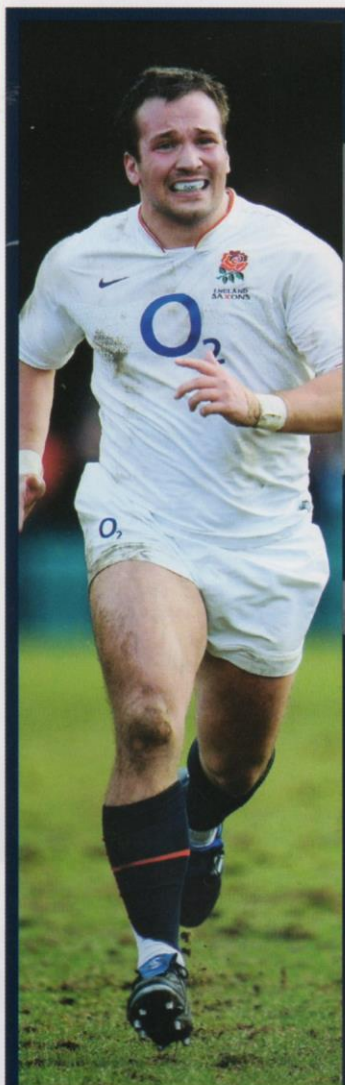
We have a few more things up our sleeves, and we should make it to at least £2,500 before the summer. Huge thanks to everyone who turned up and enjoyed the day.

So there we are – thanks for reading my stuff and have a great summer, I'll see you all back here in time for kick off next season. I can't wait – I've renewed my season ticket already.

What time's kick off again?

IT'S GOING TO BE MIGHTY ODD FOR RYAN LAMB TO STEP BACK INTO KINGSHOLM AND NOT AUTOMATICALLY HEAD FOR THE HOME DRESSING ROOM. HEAVEN KNOWS HOW HE WILL FEEL WHEN HE RUNS OUT ONTO THE GROUND WHERE HE GREW UP AS AN OPPOSITION PLAYER.

DAVE KING'S WORLD OF RUGBY

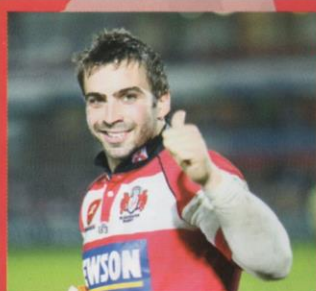


ENGLAND SAXONS will return to the United States this summer to face Russia and the U.S.A. Eagles in the Churchill Cup pool stages on 9th June, followed by a triple header finals day, where they will potentially come up against Canada, Uruguay or France 'A' on 19th June.



WHEN we recorded 47 points in our victory over Sale Sharks on 27th February here at Kingsholm, it was the fourth occasion that we had surpassed 40 points against that opposition since the game went professional.

In the 2001-2 season we defeated the northern club 42-14, the following season of we recorded a 44-8 victory and in the 2006-7 season we were 44 points to 24 victors. Although we have recorded a 44-21 win at Hayward Road in the 2001-2 season, we have yet to win at Edgeley Park!



WE HAVE used 39 different players in our Guinness Premiership matches this season and 44 in the EDF Energy Cup whilst in the Heineken Cup we used 32 players. We have no ever presents in league encounters or in the EDF Energy Cup while Nicky Robinson and Dave Attwood were the only two players to make maximum appearances in the Heineken Cup.

DURING the course of this 2009-10 season we have been able to field no fewer than twenty three international players. Paul Doran-Jones and Mike Tindall were the only England players to earn a cap in the current campaign.



PRIOR to our match today versus London Irish we have recorded 685 points in all competitions and conceded 692 points.



AS THE season draws to a conclusion we bid farewell shortly to several players, notably Gareth Delve due to try his luck down under in Australia. Marco Bortolami returns to his native Italy. Adam Eustace is moving to Northampton, Apo Satala is moving north to join Kingsley Jones at Sale Sharks. Finally, good luck to Greg Somerville who is returning to the Southern Hemisphere.



WE HAVE received 16 yellow cards this season while opposition teams have received nine. This means in effect we have played two matches with 14 players.



James Simpson-Daniel will once again reach this season's conclusion still needing to record a try versus Leicester Tigers, the only league club he has failed to record a try against.



THE ONLY home match where we have received an increase in attendance compared with the corresponding match of last season was when we entertained Worcester where there were 2,465 extra supporters. While in away league matches fixtures only Bath and Leicester showed an increase in our corresponding away fixtures in 2008-9.



OUR FORMER player James Forrester is the only other player to record more than one hat trick including one versus Caerphilly in the European Shield. James showed his prowess in abundance versus Bristol, scoring hat tricks in a League match and in the RFU's domestic cup competition.

Simpson-Daniel also finishes this season with a club career record of 6 hat tricks, two in league encounters versus Bath and Harlequins, two in domestic cup competitions versus Harlequins (again!) and Cardiff and two in European competition versus Viadana and Buceresti.

PETER ARNOLD'S GLOUCESTER TALK

END OF THE LINE

AND a rocky old line it has been at times. Almost as if Doctor Beeching had been wielding his axe again.

I think we knew from day one that the 2009/10 season was going to be a rough ride. We had suffered a mass defection of some of our most valued players, our squad had been reduced in size, and we sympathised with a relatively inexperienced Head Coach who didn't even have a Director of Rugby to take some of the pressure off him. The omens weren't good.

Yet it all started promisingly enough. We beat Bath handily at Kingsholm, which pleased everyone, not knowing that Bath had problems of their own which have only been resolved fairly recently.

From then on, the only way was down, and we plummeted. Indeed, we started to hear the unthinkable word 'relegation' muttered darkly around the murkier recesses of the clubs and pubs of Gloucester.

"Thank heaven for Leeds" we thought, confidently expecting the northerners to do the gentlemanly thing and sink gracefully back from whence they came.

Unfortunately, the Tykes had other ideas, and fought tooth and nail to cement their place in the Premiership. The bottom of the table clash became a real dog fight, involving Leeds, Worcester and even Bath for a while. Thankfully, we just managed to stay aloof from such unseemly goings-on, but things were by no means rosy.

Then Santa Claus sprinkled some magic dust and everything

changed. Up to a point, anyway. We achieved some notable victories, and came within a harshly disallowed try of beating Northampton to win the LV= Cup.

No one can pretend that everything in the garden is lovely. We still have trouble winning away from home, and our defence has been called into question.

Nevertheless, some very encouraging signs have emerged. The arrival of Molenaar and Taylor from Nottingham has stiffened our backbone, and the development of Charlie Sharples and Freddie Burns from our own ranks has been intensely gratifying.

So we're not having a champagne season, but things could have been much, much worse.

SO WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

YOUR guess is as good as mine. I've been reading and hearing a good deal of optimism about next season. The theory goes that we have had a rough old season, and have come through our baptism of fire relatively unscathed.

We've had a fairly untried squad who, understandably enough, took time to get to know each other and adapt to various styles of play. Now they know a lot more about a lot of things than they did at the start of the season. There's a great deal of talent about, and next time round, we'll soldier forth and achieve great things.

I hope the theory is proved by events, I really do, but I have a few



IT CRIES OUT ALOUD THAT SINBAD SHOULD GET ON THE PLANE, ASH CLOUD PERMITTING. IT WOULD BE NICE TO THINK THAT ALEX BROWN AND DAVE ATTWOOD MIGHT BE IN THE FRAME.

nibbles floating around in my cranium.

Sure – next season's squad should be more resilient than it was. They've learned that the hard way. In fact, it should be stronger all round. The problem with that is that all the Premiership sides grow stronger year on year. Just look at the way Bath, Leicester and Northampton have been recruiting already.

Second, we've lost some valuable experience, mainly in the pack. Eustace, Bortolami, Delve, Somerville and Satala have all moved on and their departure leaves something of a hole in the front eight. The arrival of the junior Mr. Deacon is welcome, but he can't be everywhere at once.

We have some very promising young talent emerging among the forwards, but they do need some direction, which is why Peter Buxton and Jake Boer are so important. Yet if you recruit too heavily, you deprive your young talent of the chance to prove itself and develop. It's quite a balancing act.

The backs look to me to be fairly satisfactory and will, no doubt, cause opposition sides plenty of problems next season.

The worry remains at full back. Ollie Morgan is brilliant, but his injury record is a concern. Freddie Burns has done a great job, but he is after all, only a stop gap who would prefer to play at 10. I suppose tempting Jonny Goodridge back from Leeds is out of the question?

So I have few worries about the backs. As long as we don't suffer



too badly from injuries.

Apart from that Mrs. Lincoln, how did you enjoy the show?

SUMMER WELL!

IN an odd, masochistic sort of way I've quite enjoyed this season. It's certainly been interesting. One thing about supporting Gloucester – you might get screwed occasionally, but you never get bored.

So how do we fill our time in before next season rolls around? We do have a couple of 20/20 cricket matches to look forward to, just down the road at Archdeacon Meadow, which will probably be good fun, just as long as you don't confuse it with cricket. Rather like sevens rugby, really.

I can never get enthused by the summer tours, somehow. The touring

parties are never at full national strength, for one reason or another. So the matches aren't really a measure of the comparative strengths of the participating countries.

This does have the advantage of giving opportunity and experience to fringe players and those yet to make their mark, so it will be interesting to see if any of our guys get an overseas trip this summer.

It cries out aloud that Sinbad should get on the plane, ash cloud permitting. It would be nice to think that Alex Brown and Dave Attwood might be in the frame.

You'll think of other candidates, but I'm not holding my breath.

Anyway, I hope you have a thoroughly good summer, and I look forward to joining you in the search for mutual truth and purpose come next September.

ARMAGNAC

Olivier Azam

There was a time when retired football players would retire from the game and turn their hand to running a pub.

With the riches available to the top players nowadays, that's not quite so prevalent in this day and age but the majority of professional rugby players have to make plans for an alternative career for when they finally hang up their boots.

Here at Gloucester Rugby, we have one individual who has already embarked upon his own business enterprise – Olivier Azam and his restaurant, Armagnac in Cheltenham.

The matchday programme caught up with Olivier recently to find out a little more about what inspired a veteran of countless front row battles to enter the world of haute cuisine.

"Food is in my blood," explained the French international hooker. "I was

born on a farm with all the best products available to me and my family have always been keen on their food and their wine. I was taught from a very young age to appreciate good food."

"A lot of the recipes are inspired from my background back in France but most of them are created by the very talented chef that I have working at the restaurant."

France is obviously renowned as the home of gastronomy so, whilst England has made strides in recent years, he must have had something of a shock when he first arrived in England?

"It's true, when I first arrived in England,



the perception of English food wasn't great. However, I have to say that the food over here has improved massively over the past ten years."

"Here in the Cotswolds, especially, you can find some fine produce and very good restaurants. One thing I am very keen to do in the restaurant is use good local produce whenever possible."

What was it that made him decide to open his own establishment especially when he is still playing full time. Is it



difficult to balance both careers?

"I always wanted to open a restaurant, that was a long term goal. An opportunity came up for me to pursue my passion for food and drink and I decided to go for it. It was a very easy decision to make."

"I make sure that I oversee everything that goes on the menu and I also choose all the wine. So, everything has my seal of approval."

"It can be difficult sometimes because rugby and the restaurant are both very important to me but, at the moment, rugby is my priority but I do give a lot of my free time to the restaurant and I'm always there on my day off."

"But I must also mention my wife Katie, whose contribution is very important. She plays a big part in everything I do."

How would he describe Armagnac to someone who hasn't been there before?

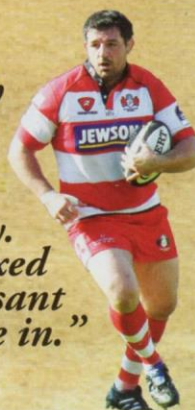
"It's a typical French bistro. The food ranges from the classic dishes to an exciting dish of the day. The decor is very relaxed and it's a very pleasant atmosphere to dine in. We also have a nice terrace at the front of the restaurant which is lovely in the summer."

Rugby players are renowned for appreciating their food, so what's the feedback been like from his Gloucester Rugby team mates?

"Most of the boys have been to the restaurant and I think that they all enjoyed it. It's great to see them coming along with their families and I always make sure that they have a good time." And what are the plans for the future in terms of the restaurant?

"I think I'd like to stay around for a while after I finish playing. This area is home to me now and the restaurant is going well, it's a great venture. But I hope to stay involved in rugby in some way, perhaps with a move into coaching."

"It's a typical French bistro. The food ranges from the classic dishes to an exciting dish of the day. The decor is very relaxed and it's a very pleasant atmosphere to dine in."





SATURDAY 3RD APRIL 2010 / 17:30 KO

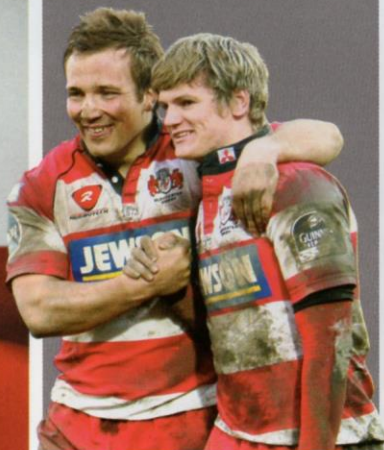
**GLOUCESTER RUGBY 29****SARACENS 28****COACH'S COMMENTS**

"We got in front at 29-18 and I thought we had done enough. Credit to Sarries, they came back. Two of the tries we let through were poor so I was disappointed with that but delighted with the boys' effort."

"The game was not about being pretty, it was about doing the basics well and the biggest criticism from me was that we didn't do the basics right when that was what we needed."

KEY MOMENT

Sadly for Saracens' South African fly half Derick Houggard, it has to be his missed penalty with the last kick of the game. Regardless of everything that went before, if it had gone over then Saracens would have won. However, it didn't...



Gloucester and Saracens served up a belter of a game in front of the Sky cameras over Easter weekend with the result of the game hanging in the balance right until the very last kick.

The momentum had swayed to and fro throughout a pulsating encounter but Gloucester looked to have done enough when they earned a penalty with only a minute or so left on the clock.

Nicky Robinson safely deposited the ball into touch and all Gloucester

had to do was win the lineout and run out the clock.

However, Sarries nicked possession and won a penalty a couple of metres inside their own half when Robinson failed to roll away from the tackle area. Up stepped Houggard and, on the high veldt, would probably have had metres to spare. However, at sea level in Gloucester, he was short and wide and Gloucester triumphed.

In truth, neither side deserved to lose. The week before, the Men in



GLOUCESTER HAD TO WITHSTAND A FEROCIOUS OPENING BARRAGE BUT DULY DID SO AND MATCHED BRAD BARRITT'S SCORE WITH A WELL WORKED TRY FROM CHARLIE SHARPLES.



Black started to shed their 'kick and chase' reputation and put 50 plus points on Newcastle.

And they set out to play in the same vein against Gloucester. When Redpath's men countered in similar style, a thriller of a game followed.

Gloucester had to withstand a ferocious opening barrage but duly did so and matched Brad Barritt's score with a well worked try from Charlie Sharples.

There was never much in it and Freddie Burns' goal kicking was

critical on the day. The young full back kicked flawlessly off the tee and finished with 2 conversions, five penalties and a 100% record. Just as sweetly struck was his chip that led to Sharples' second score.

There was never much in it and Saracens kept going right until the bitter end even after trailing by eight points with only five minutes to go.

Alex Goode's try set up a grandstand finish and hearts were in mouths as Hoggard took centre stage. The former Springbok fluffed his line and Gloucester took the applause.

THE TEAMS

GLOUCESTER RUGBY

Burns
Sharples
Molenaar
Fuimaono-Sapolu
Vainikolo
Taylor
Lawson
Dickinson
Azam
Doran-Jones
James
Bortolami
Boer
Hazell
Eustace

REPLACEMENTS:

Lawson (for Azam 79), Wood (for Dickinson 63), Capdevielle (for Doran-Jones 68), Brown (for Bortolami 52), Pasqualin (for Burns 75), Robinson (for Taylor 47), Simpson-Daniel (for Molenaar 37), Qera (for Eustace 53)



SARACENS

Goode
Tagicakibau
Powell
Barritt
Wyles
Jackson
de Kock
Gill
Brits
Plessis
Vyvyan
Botha
Burger
Saul
Joubert

REPLACEMENTS:

Ongaro, Agüero (for Gill 31), Skuse (for Du Plessis 28), Ryder (for Botha 52), Melck, Rauluni, Hoggard (for Barritt 52), Houghton



LONDON WASPS 42



GLOUCESTER RUGBY 26

COACH'S COMMENTS

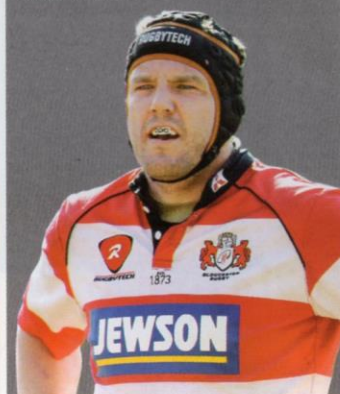
"Defensively we gave them some soft tries and you're playing against a side that have some finishers and you leak two or three easy tackles and then suddenly you're chasing the game."

"We knew that defence was the only thing that was going to win us the game, we knew that we've been a good attacking side all year, but defensively it was poor."

KEY MOMENT

Adam Eustace's 25th minute try got Gloucester back into the game at 17-13 and Bryan Redpath's needed the next score if they were to give Wasps a run for the money.

However, the potent Wasps attack clicked into gear once more and Tom Varndell wasn't held in a tackle and reached for the line to take the game away from Gloucester.



Gloucester's European ambitions were swept away at a sun drenched Adams Park as a Melbourne bound Danny Cipriani, in one of his final appearances in the black and gold Wasps shirt, dipped into his bag of attacking tricks to inspire a home win.

It was a performance by the mercurial fly half that somehow typified his spell in English rugby. In attack, he seemed able to inspire scoring opportunities at will. In defence, he didn't seem to want to know.

From Gloucester's point of view, it was a frustrating day. They played

with ambition and no little skill and were able to stretch Wasps on several occasions.

However, despite scoring 26 points on the road in a European quarter final, it was the defensive side of the performance that was found wanting as Wasps clinically finished the chances they created.

Gloucester started strongly and, wisely given what followed when Wasps got their hands on the ball, maintained possession to earn an early 3-0 lead.

The lead was fleeting. In conditions perfect for running rugby, Wasps had the platform to keep the ball



...DESPITE SCORING 26 POINTS ON THE ROAD IN A EUROPEAN QUARTER FINAL, IT WAS THE DEFENSIVE SIDE OF THE PERFORMANCE THAT WAS FOUND WANTING AS WASPS CLINICALLY FINISHED THE CHANCES THEY CREATED.



in hand and quickly struck from deep with Ben Jacobs running in the score.

Cipriani was the mastermind for the second try as his silken running opened up the Gloucester defence for Serge Betsen to add the second try.

Eustace's try gave Gloucester a glimmer of hope but Tom Varndell, who would end with a hat trick, quickly got Wasps back on the front foot and Cipriani matched Nicky Robinson's goal kicking to maintain his side's lead.

Gloucester kept Wasps pinned back for much of the second half but, in hindsight, the home side were merely soaking up the pressure and were quick to pounce when an opportunity presented itself.

Varndell's second score pretty much ended the game as a contest and, although Gloucester responded defiantly with a try from Charlie Sharples, Varndell had the final word as he finished the game's final move with a try to complete his hat trick.

THE TEAMS

LONDON WASPS

Jacobs
Sackey
Waldouck
Kefu
Varndell
Cipriani
Simpson
Payne
Webber
Broster
Ward-Smith
Skivington
Worsley
Betsen
Hart

REPLACEMENTS:

Walder for Kefu (74), Fury for Simpson (74), Taulafo for Payne (45), Lindsay for Webber (59), Baker for Broster (76), Rees for Betsen (59), Shaw for Hart (60).

NOT USED: van Gisbergen.



GLOUCESTER RUGBY

Burns
Simpson-Daniel
May
Tindall
Vainikolo
Robinson
R. Lawson
Dickinson
Azam
Doran-Jones
Attwood
Brown
Buxton
Qera
Eustace

REPLACEMENTS:

Sharples for May (62), Voyce for Vainikolo (65), Wood for Dickinson (45), S. Lawson for Azam (45), Capdevielle for Doran-Jones (68), James for Brown (68), Strokosch for Eustace (56).

NOT USED: Pasqualin



SATURDAY 17TH APRIL 2010 / 15:00PM KO

**NORTHAMPTON SAINTS 38****GLOUCESTER RUGBY 23****COACH'S COMMENTS**

"We feel unlucky to leave Northampton with nothing, although our ball retention was occasionally poor. More importantly, we need to adapt better to referees."

"You need to take the rough with the smooth in this business, but I can't help feeling there's been a lot of rough for me this season. We worked so hard all week and the boys in the dressing room are gutted."

"But as you develop, so you learn. We played some very good football and we created some good opportunities. I think the difference was Northampton took theirs better than we did."

KEY MOMENT

With the game heading towards half time, Gloucester were trailing 16-10 and were still well and truly in the game as the backs swarmed into the home 22.

Charlie Sharples chipped the full back and it was a foot race between the winger and Saints centre James Downey to win the race to the ball.

When Downey punched the ball dead, Gloucester seemed to have a genuine case for a penalty try but were stunned when referee Andrew Small saw fit to award nothing more than a 22 drop out and Northampton didn't look back.



For the second week in a row on their travels, Gloucester enjoyed enough territory and possession and scored enough points to win the game.

However, for the second week in a row, they came up against an opponent who played well enough in attack to ruthlessly exploit any defensive weaknesses on Gloucester's part and it added up to a second frustrating defeat.

Northampton and Gloucester met, of course, in the final of the LV=Cup a few weeks ago and served up a feast of attacking rugby. Saturday was no different and the neutral would have been impressed with the entertainment factor.

The feeling though as Gloucester left Franklin's Gardens was one of frustration.

Frustration that Gloucester had once again slugged it out with one of the country's in form sides of the season and come off marginally second best.

Frustration that so much good work in attack resulted in insufficient points to win the game. Frustration that the defence couldn't keep the opposition at bay just when it needed it.

And frustration that key decisions went against the side which, if they'd gone the other way, could have made all the difference to the overall outcome.



TWO NORTHAMPTON TRIES IN FOUR MINUTES IN THE EARLY PART OF THE SECOND HALF COULD HAVE COMPLETELY DEMORALISED GLOUCESTER BUT THEY KEPT BATTLING AND DAVE ATTWOOD'S TRY KEPT THEM IN THE HUNT.



Northampton centre James Downey, in particular, must have come across a four leaf clover on his way to the stadium!

Another good start saw Gloucester taken an early lead through a Nicky Robinson penalty only for the Premiership's top try scorer, Chris Ashton, to slice through the midfield defence and add to his impressive scoring resume.

James Simpson-Daniel showed that Gloucester have their own talent in the backline as his weaving run created a score for Charlie Sharples

whilst Sharples was denied a second only by a controversial officiating call.

Two Northampton tries in four minutes in the early part of the second half could have completely demoralised Gloucester but they kept battling and Dave Attwood's try kept them in the hunt.

However, still pressing for a bonus point, a turnover by Gloucester gave Bruce Reihana a chance to cheekily gift Ashton his hat trick with a pass in the in goal area to completely close the door.

THE TEAMS

NORTHAMPTON SAINTS

Foden
Ashton
Clarke
Downey
Reihana
Myler
Dickson
Tonga'uiha
Hartley
Murray
Fernandez Lobbe
Kruger
Lawes
Dowson
Wilson

REPLACEMENTS:

Geraghty for Myler (62), Mujati for Murray (62), Sharman for Fernandez Lobbe (60), Easter for Sharman (63).

NOT USED: Dreyer, Best, Dickens, Ansbro.



GLOUCESTER RUGBY

Burns
Sharples
May
Tindall
Simpson-Daniel
Robinson
R. Lawson
Wood
Azam
Doran-Jones
Attwood
Brown
Strokosch
Boer
Eustace

REPLACEMENTS:

Replacements: Morgan for Burns (45), Voyce for May (57), Dickinson for Wood (47), S. Lawson for Azam (40), Capdevielle for Doran-Jones (63), Buxton for Boer (54).

NOT USED: James, Pasqualin.

vs LONDON IRISH //065

TODAY'S LINE-UPS



Vs LONDON IRISH
SATURDAY 24/4/10
KO 3:00PM

**GLOUCESTER
RUGBY**

Vs

**LONDON
IRISH**

**GUINNESS
PREMIERSHIP**



OLLY MORGAN

15

PETER HEWAT

FULLBACK

T JAMES SIMPSON-DANIEL

14

JOHN RUDD

WING

MIKE TINDALL (C)

13

TOM HOMER *SEVARI*

CENTRE

TIM MOLENAAR

12

SEILALA MAPUSUA

CENTRE

T LESLEY VAINIKOLO

11

DELON ARMITAGE

WING

PPPPPC NICKY ROBINSON

10

CHRIS MALONE

FLY-HALF

RORY LAWSON

9

PAUL HODGSON

SCRUM-HALF

NICK WOOD

1

ALEX CORBISIERO

PROP

SCOTT LAWSON

2

DANIE COETZEE

HOOKER

PAUL DORAN-JONES

3

FAAN RAUTENBACH

PROP

DAVE ATTWOOD

4

KIERAN ROCHE *T*

LOCK

ALEX BROWN

5

BOB CASEY (C)

LOCK

PETER BUXTON

6

JAMIE GIBSON

FLANKER

AKAPUSI QERA

7

STEFFON ARMITAGE *T*

FLANKER

ADAM EUSTACE

8

THORPE
GEORGE STOWERS

NO.8

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	BP	PTS
1 Leicester	20	14	1	5	478	271	10	68
2 Northampton	20	15	0	5	414	287	6	66
3 Saracens	20	13	1	6	420	317	7	61
4 Wasps	20	12	0	8	350	343	5	53
5 London Irish	20	10	3	7	442	319	6	52
6 Bath	20	10	2	8	376	344	7	51
7 Harlequins	20	8	2	10	363	424	5	41
8 GLOUCESTER	20	8	1	11	413	415	6	40
9 Leeds	20	6	1	13	268	444	6	32
10 Newcastle	20	5	4	11	266	376	4	32
11 Sale	20	6	1	13	283	428	5	31
12 Worcester	20	3	4	13	280	385	6	26

TOP POINTS SCORERS: 2009-2010

184 Willie Walker	Worcester Warriors
183 Jimmy Gopperth	Newcastle Falcons
173 Nick Evans	Harlequins

TOP TRY SCORERS: 2009-2010

15 Chris Ashton	Northampton Saints
9 Matt Banahan	Bath Rugby
7 James S-Daniel	Gloucester Rugby

TOP PENALTY KICKERS: 2009-2010

53 Jimmy Gopperth	Newcastle Falcons
47 Willie Walker	Worcester Warriors
38 Nicky Robinson	Gloucester Rugby

MOST APPEARANCES : 2008-2009

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

REPLACEMENTS

- 16 OLIVIER AZAM
- 17 ALASDAIR DICKINSON *T*
- 18 GREG SOMERVILLE
- 19 WILL JAMES
- 20 ALASDAIR STROKOSCH
- 21 JORDI PASQUALIN
- 22 JONNY MAY *g*
- 23 CHARLIE SHARPLES *BURNS*

- 16 DAVID PAICE
- 17 DAN MURPHY *T*
- 18 JAMES TIDESWELL
- 19 MATT GARVEY
- 20 RICHARD THORPE *STOWERS*
- 21 JONATHAN JOSEPH *HOMER P*
- 22 JAMIE LENNARD *THORPE*
- 23 BEN STEVENSON *RYAN LANG C*

THE OFFICIALS

REFEREE:

Sean Davey

ASSISTANT REFEREES:

Andrew Pearce and Kevin Stewart

4TH OFFICIAL:

Mark Tovey