



London Irish™

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OFFICIAL MATCHDAY PROGRAMME 2002/03

COMPETITION SPONSOR



Gloucester

Sunday 10th November • 2.30pm

Zurich Premiership



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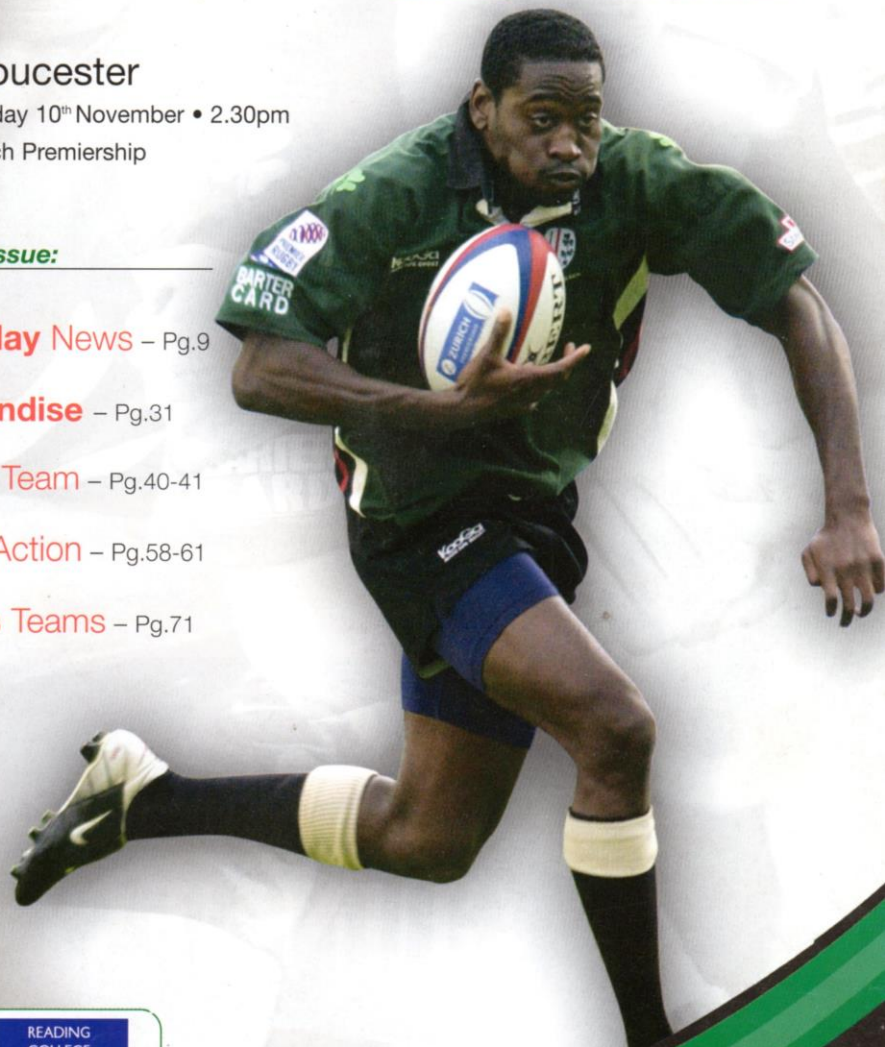
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Conor's comments



The question you ask yourself when things aren't going so well is what has changed and how can we get back on track? If the answer was easy to put your finger on then we would all be millionaires. More often than not the answer comes down to hard work and going back to basics.

For our team the basics start and end with defence, that is our foundation from where we can build. Over the past number of weeks we have gone back to basics and the physicality has returned to our team to the extent that we are a difficult side to play against again. More importantly there is a "buzz" among the guys as confidence slowly returns.

This has not resulted in immediate results or a return to the form we know we can aspire to, but it is obvious that slowly but surely we will turn things around.

Unfortunately things get no easier on the pitch, especially with today's visitors, table-topping Gloucester who are brilliantly coached and organised by Nigel Melville and Dean Ryan. Gloucester has real strength in-depth to its squad and game breakers all over the place. We could not face a more difficult game but your team is relishing the challenge.

All matches between the two clubs are always intensely competitive and that rivalry always extends to the supporters, both sets of whom always come in numbers and are vocal to put it mildly!



There will be a great atmosphere in the stadium this afternoon, two hugely committed teams and hopefully a great game of rugby.

To our supporters we will be working as hard as we always do to ensure you get the result you deserve for your efforts. Thanks to everyone who made the long journey to Newcastle for our win last weekend, we'll see you all later in the bar.

Many thanks



Conor O'Shea
Director of Rugby

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GLOUCESTER



Andy Gomarsall

Written by James Bennett

HEAD2HEAD Irish v Gloucester

Played	16	
London Irish Won	5	31.3%
Gloucester Won	11	68.8%
Drawn	0	0%
Biggest Win for London Irish	35 - 10	16 Apr 2001
Biggest Win for Gloucester	40 - 15	26 Dec 1999

One word describes the change at Gloucester Rugby Club that has seen the Cherry and Whites lead their ascent from domestic underachievers to the top of the Zurich Premiership table this year. That word is "professional".

This is not to suggest that in the past the Gloucester team did not take their role seriously - anyone who has ever donned the famous Cherry and White jersey could never be accused of giving anything other than 100% but with the advent of Nigel Melville's reign at Kingsholm came a new wave of professionalism.

This attitude has manifested itself mainly in the preparations for games, no stones are left unturned, nor avenues explored and every weakness sought and exploited as the coaching team formulates a plan to break down the game plan of every other Premiership and European opponent. In sport you get out what you put in and this hard work on the training paddock has brought a marked improvement in performance and results on match days.

This is not to detract from the results achieved by Melville's predecessor Philippe Saint Andre and the team of nations he assembled and in turn Melville has inherited. The flamboyant Frenchman opened Gloucester's eyes to a whole new market of rugby talent and brought the Club success on domestic and European fronts, never before seen at Kingsholm.

Two European semi-finals in two years, and a rise from the doldrums to the top spot in the Premiership are triumphs in themselves but with Melville's appointment, albeit with a team Saint-Andre assembled, came Gloucester's first real silverware. At the end of another marathon, energy-sapping season Melville asked his tired players to play for two extra weeks, and put off their summer breaks just a little longer. The players responded in spades. Their reward was a Twickenham victory, made all the more sweeter as it was over West Country rivals Bristol.

With expectations duly raised, and the traditionally demanding Gloucester crowd calling for more, Melville began assembling a side, on and off the pitch, that could build on the success of the Championship winning season. He took the line that "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" and only three players Delport, Buxton and Amor were drafted in to an already competitive squad.

Melville and Dean Ryan, the latter co-opted onto the coaching staff from the Shoguns, along with Australian Rudi Meier and former Springbok physio Wayne Diesel, began to raise the standards. They took the traditional Gloucester 10-man 'stick it up your jumper' game plan and added a variety of attacking

options that have seen a shift to a new fifteen-man game never before witnessed at Kingsholm. Melville has also set about shattering the perception that Gloucester sides cannot perform away from Kingsholm, already in the Premiership this season, the Cherry and Whites have beaten Quins and Newcastle and earned a draw at Bath. The disappointment in the Gloucester dressing room after the game at the Rec demonstrated how far they have come. Never before would a Gloucester team be so disillusioned at not securing a victory at the ground they have never had a league win.

Today the Cherry and Whites visit the Madejski Stadium with another opportunity to show how far they have come in Melville's relatively short reign at Kingsholm. Gloucester has lost on its last three visits to Reading - two Premiership and one Cup and each time failed to perform to their potential. They are without three big names as Vickery, Woodman, and Simpson-Daniel are all on international duty this weekend, but they do include Andy Gomarsall, James Forrester and Marcel Garvey. Clive Woodward deemed the latter trio surplus to requirements this weekend and no-doubt each one will have a point to prove to the England supremo.

Zurich Premiership

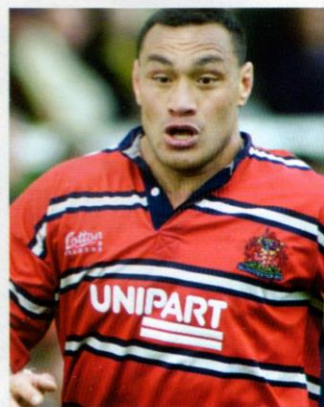
Team	Pts
Gloucester	30
Leeds	27
Leicester	23

Sharks	23
Wasps	23
Northampton	22
Harlequins	15
Newcastle	14
Saracens	13
London Irish	11
Bath	10

Bristol	5

Gloucester Squad

Simon Amor	Olivier Azam
Tom Beim	Jake Boer
Peter Buxton	Chris Catling
Mark Cornwell	Nick Cox
Andy Deacon	Thinus Delport
Adam Eustace	Terry Fanolua
Rob Fidler	James Forrester
Chris Fortey	Josh Frape
Marcel Garvey	Andy Gomarsall
Jon Goodridge	Andy Hazell
Mark Irish	Ludovic Mercier
Duncan Murray	Daren O'Leary
Junior Paramore	Henry Paul
Ed Pearce	Rodrigo Roncero
James Simpson-Daniel	Clive Stuart-Smith
Robert Todd	Phil Vickery
Trevor Woodman	



Junior Paramore

Today's Teams:



London Irish

Gloucester

HORAK, Michael	15	PAUL, Henry
BISHOP, Justin	14	GARVEY, Marcel
ROSSOUW, Pieter	13	FANOLUA, Terry
VENTER, Brendan	12	TODD, Robert
BURROWS, Nick	11	DELPORT, Thinus
EVERITT, Barry	10	MERCIER, Ludovic
EDWARDS, Darren	9	GOMARSALL, Andy
WORSLEY, Mike	1	RONCERO, Rodrigo
DROTSKE, Naka	2	FORTEY, Chris
HALFORD, Simon	3	DEACON, Andy
STRUDWICK, Ryan (C)	4	EUSTACE, Adam
KENNEDY, Nick	5	CORNWAEILL, Mark
GUSTARD, Paul	6	BOER, Jake
DAWSON, Kieron	7	FORRESTER, James
SHEASBY, Chris	8	PARAMORE, Junior

REPLACEMENTS

BARRETT, Kevin	16	STUART SMITH, Clive
MAPLETOFT, Mark	17	BEIM, Tom
COCKLE, James	18	CATLING, Chris
FLAVIN, Adrian	19	IRISH, Mark
DELANEY, Glenn	20	AZAM, Olivier
HATLEY, Neal	21	BUXTON, Peter
DURANT, Pierre	22	PEARCE, Ed

TODAY'S OFFICIALS

Referee:
Mr A Rowden

Touch Judge 1:
Mr S Leyshon
Touch Judge 2:
Mr H Jones-Williams

4th Official:
Mr P Emerson