

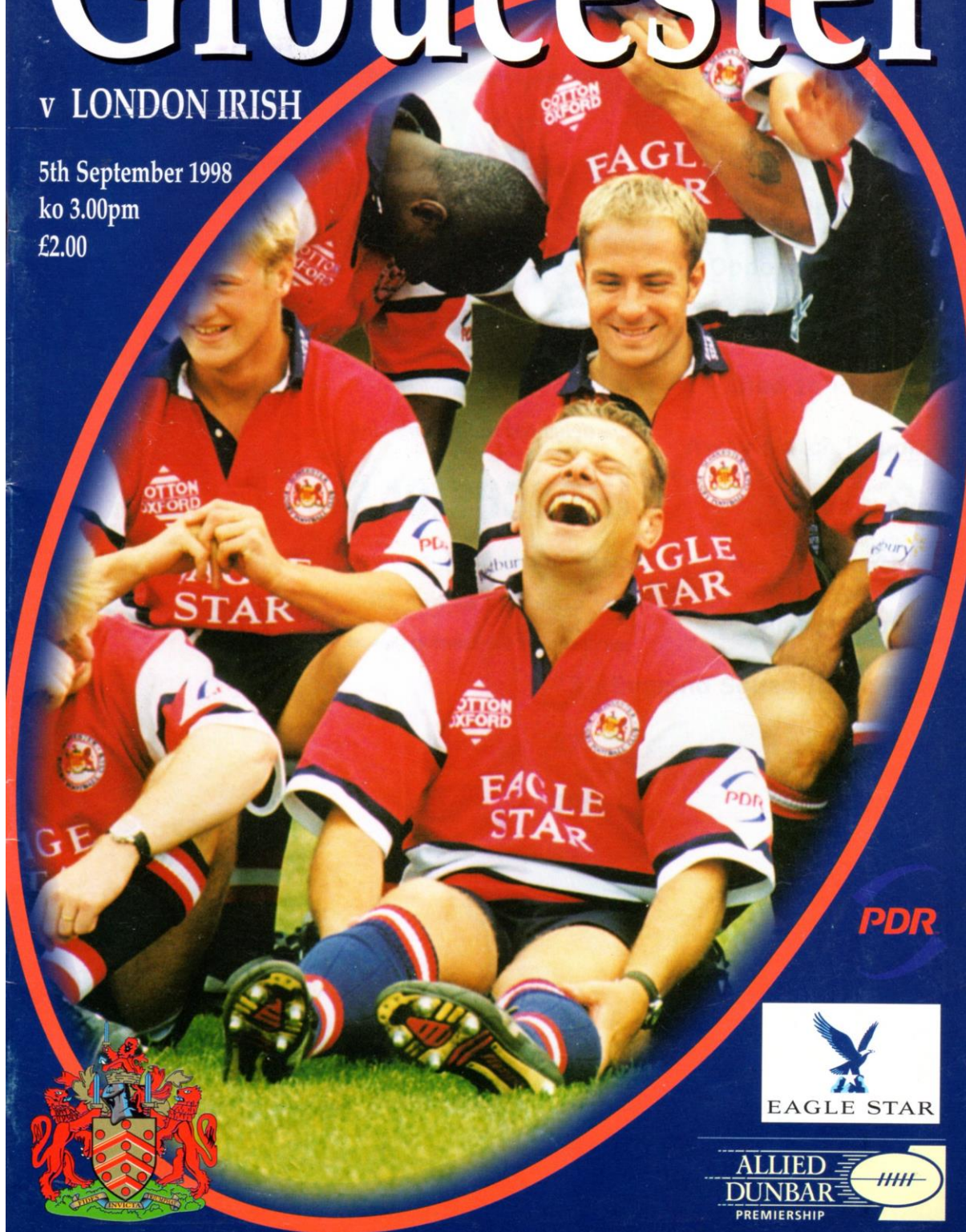
Gloucester

v LONDON IRISH

5th September 1998

ko 3.00pm

£2.00



PDR



ALLIED
DUNBAR
PREMIERSHIP



FROM THE TEAM MANAGER

Right, here we go again and I would like to welcome you all to Kingsholm which I hope will be another interesting and exciting season and that Gloucester can improve on their league position of last season. I am sure you have all summered well and followed with great interest the efforts of the Gloucester players who were involved in the southern hemisphere tour. I am sure that you will agree that the seven Gloucester players involved all did exceedingly well and were a great tribute to this club and country.

I am sure that you would all like to congratulate when you see him Dave Sims on eventually gaining his full England caps which he thoroughly deserved. I must admit that it brought a little tear to my eye when I saw him run out on to the field in New Zealand. Dave is a player who has respect in all rugby circles and I would like to take this opportunity in wishing Dave a very successful season as captain of the club and there is no doubt he will lead by example.

During the summer, Richard and Ed Archer have been involved in intensive pre-season training which has revolved around endurance training, speed training on the track at Crypt School and weightlifting to improve their strengths. The fitness of all the players has improved tremendously and well prepared for the season.

During the first week of August we went down to St

Ives on a pre-season training week which again proved to be very successful and we were hosted by Hayle RFC. After returning from St Ives we have had a succession of trial matches against Cheltenham, Newbury and Launceston, all of which has given the coaches and selectors a good opportunity to look at the individual form of all the players in the squad.

Our main signing this season has been Simon Mannix from Sale RFC who has been capped by the All Blacks. I am sure that you are waiting with bated breath to see how Simon settles in at Kingsholm and performs in front of the legendary shed.

At the time of writing this, and as far as Gloucester RFC is concerned, our first Allied Dunbar league match will be against London Irish at home. It has been very frustrating for everybody involved in our game and I feel especially sorry for the supporters who are yet to have a fixture list confirmed, and we are aware that many of you have joined and paid your membership without this information. Hopefully, this will never be allowed to happen again. From Gloucester's point of view, Hamish Brown and Tom Walkinshaw have been very busy behind the scenes involved in the negotiations with regard to the fixtures and I know that they

have done everything possible to bring the negotiations to a satisfactory conclusion so that a fixture list could have been issued earlier.

Anyway, we must now forget about that and get on the with job in hand. As I have mentioned, Gloucester have been working very hard and I am sure that all the other clubs in the division have been doing the same with regard to recruitment and training, and this season's Allied Dunbar Premiership One will be a very, very hard league to play in.

I would like to welcome our friends from London Irish who always arrive at Kingsholm in good spirits and provide strong opposition and give Gloucester a very competitive and hard game. I would like to wish them all the best for the season and I am sure that they will improve on their league position of last year under the guidance of Dick Best.

It is lovely to see you all here again and thank you for your continued support.

Best wishes

JOHN FIDLER
Team Manager



LETTER FROM THE SKIPPER

During Dave's last tenure of the office, one could see him growing into the job, week by week. After a while his natural air of authority seemed to permeate the whole side. He got the lads playing for him, as the saying goes.

It's nice, therefore that he has spared some time to provide a piece for the first match programme of the year. Obviously, we wish him all the success in the world, both in his Gloucester role, and in his aspirations towards further International honours.

No more ado.
Here's Dave's letter.

Dear Peter,

As usual, I would like to start the season with a word to all our loyal supporters, here to help us start the 1998/9 campaign off in style.

First of all, I would like to thank everyone who has offered me 'all the best' in my role as Club Captain this year. To lead Gloucester out at Kingsholm is one of the proudest jobs in rugby, and I shall certainly

do my best to live up to everyone's expectations. We have a strong and exciting squad again this season, with some valuable new signings, and we hope to achieve the results that the supporters are hoping for, and what is more to achieve them in style. We shall be going all out to crack the away match bogey that plagued us last

season, and when we do that, then we shall be a force to be reckoned with indeed.

On behalf of all of us who went on the Southern Hemisphere tour, I would also like to thank everyone who has complimented us on our efforts in the three strongest rugby-playing nations in the world. It was a very hard tour, but we all learned a lot from the experience, and I hope that it will 'rub off' on the field this season while playing for Gloucester.

Finally, a big vote of thanks from all the players to all of you, the best crowd of supporters in the game, for all your backing in the past. We all know we can count on it this season, too.

Best wishes to everyone for 1998/9.

Yours sincerely,

DAVE SIMS



YOU BOUGHT IT. WHY NOT DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT ?

You spent a couple of quid on this programme. Why not have an influence on what goes into it?

The Club is, of course, very grateful for your support in this way, and the other side of that particular coin is that we'd all like the Match Programme to reflect your views, and enable other GRFC fans to share them. Just so long as they're not too libellous or obscene, that is.

The traditional 'Letters to the Editor' are always welcome, of course, and we get a fair smattering of those each season, as you know. But there may be other opportunities for participation, too. For example, 'How So-and-So Sees It' is a regular feature, and often enables various officials of the Club to tell you about recent and imminent developments on and off the field. But supporters do occasionally make their feelings known in this way (thanks again,

Vicky Hyett and Mike Price), and there's no reason why that shouldn't continue to happen.

Let's think a bit more laterally. Anyone got any quiz questions to share with us? If you do decide to play the Torquemada and torment us in this way, please send the answers at the same time, so that they can be checked, and printed, either in the same issue or in the succeeding one.

Another thought. Regular Kingsholm people are always glad to hear news of past players who have dropped out of sight, for one reason or another. So if you happen to know of the whereabouts and circumstances of any ex-player who has moved away, perhaps because of his job or whatever, then please let us know about it. Same applies to celebrations, anniversaries, or whatever, of well-known Kingsholm folk. Or, on second thoughts, not-so-well-known

ones, too.

'Heard from The Shed' (or wherever) is also a rich source of humour and entertainment. If you hear a particularly apposite, and not too rude, remark thrown from the crowd, why not share it? Goodness knows, we get enough of them. Same applies to anecdotes, interesting statistics, or anything else your fertile brain suggests.

Can't promise to print everything we receive, of course. Space is a consideration, and so is the fact that things may be going on around the Club of which you are not aware. Wouldn't want to queer the Club's pitch when, for example, delicate planning or financial negotiations are going on, just for the sake of an innocent, but unguarded remark.

Anyway, it's over to you now. Send any contributions to Claudia Cox at the Club.

WELCOME BACK KEITH ! THANKS A LOT JOHN !

It's great news that Keith Richardson is coming back to Kingsholm. Not so good news that he is to take over as forwards coach from John Brain.

Apparently, John has received a promotion at work, and now feels that he has to step back from the post. We're pleased for him, and wish him well in his new responsibilities. No one who has seen the Gloucester pack in action over the past few seasons would deny that he has done a great job for the Club, and he will be a hard act to follow.

No one knows that better than

Keith Richardson, and no one is more likely to be able to follow John's act than he is. You only have to look at Newbury's progress while Keith has been in charge to appreciate that.

Many people will remember Keith as a Gloucester prop forward who came perilously close to International honours, until a particularly nasty broken arm sidelined him. He did come back, and in fact skippered Gloucester, but he would be the first to admit that he was never quite the same player afterwards.

Everyone will also recall his spell as Gloucester Coach. He didn't have the material to work with which is available nowadays, but he became universally respected for his coaching abilities, which are recognised nowadays within the England set-up.

It will be good to see that reassuringly bulky figure around Kingsholm again, and to hear that cheerful Geordie accent slicing through the Glawster burr.

Great to have you back, Keith. And thanks for everything, John.

WELCOME MANNIX!



Simon Mannix arrived at Kingsholm during the summer. But you would have thought that he had been here for years!

The biography says he was born in Lower Hutt, New Zealand. But anyone striking up a conversation with the 27-year-old Kiwi would swear blind that he was true Gloucester - OK, the accent is still southern hemisphere, but his state of mind is pure Kingsholm!

You see, if you ask him about the squad competition between him and Mark Mapletoft for the number 10 jersey, you will not get the stock answer. While he admits that competition for a spot in the starting 15 every match "brings out the best in players", he also goes a stage further.

"It's not about personal achievements, it's what is good for Gloucester that really matters," he insists! The guy is now said to bleed 'cherry and white' blood

A few years ago, anyone arriving at the Club from outside a radius of 25 miles from Kingsholm was deemed to be a foreigner. But here is

Mannix coming from New Zealand - via Manchester Sale, as we now have to call them - and within months he is "one of us".

There is something about these "foreigners" from far, far away in the southern hemisphere - perhaps it is the December sunshine! Richard Tombs was quizzed by Sky Television last April on how long he, a foreigner, took to settle into the very parochial Gloucester club. Tombsy looked straight into the camera lens, put on a bit of an "I'm thinking" face for a second, and declared totally deadpan: "Oh, about half an hour!"

Mannix says much the same thing. "We are all rugby players and rugby players world-wide are all the same," he pointed out. He added that he fitted into the squad very quickly.

Mannix is very upbeat about joining Gloucester. "I honestly believe that I have joined a potential championship team," he said. "I have a tremendous respect for the club - and yes, I know a lot about the club's history," he added. Yes, Mannix is looking forward to playing in front of a packed Shed. "I never had the opportunity of playing at Kingsholm when I was with Sale," he said. But like any player the length and breadth of the country, he knows all about Kingsholm's legendary Shed and the couple of thousand "myopic wanna-be referees" who frequent rugby's equivalent of "The Kop". "I'm looking forward to having the Shed getting behind me," Mannix said! A few fans have already seen him playing in a cherry and

white jersey. During the pre-season he has appeared in every match, starting in two of the three. And the view of a handful of "Sheddies" who headed south last weekend for a spot of sunshine-rugby in Cornwall was very much along the lines of what we all know - Mannix is an explosive player and, more importantly, a playmaker.

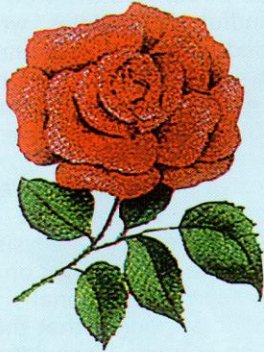
With all the video analysis and set plays that goes on in the modern professional game, it is thought that the starting number 10 could well be picked on the basis of who the opponent is, rather than who is Gloucester's "first choice". (Of course, Richard Hill is too foxy to give away too much to opponents.)

Born in August 1971, Simon Mannix was educated at St. Patrick's College, playing rugby for the school. He got his one and only All Black cap in 1994 in a match against France - his first encounter with a certain winger, Philippe Saint-Andre, who was just embarking on his rule at the French captain. He arrives in Gloucester from Manchester Sale having previously spent a couple of seasons at the Tarvisium club in Italy.

Mannix recently moved with his family into a farmhouse in the Cotswolds near Cirencester. He is married to Kirstie and they have a four-and-a-half-years-old daughter, Mollie. The farmhouse is shared with Rob Cuttmore, the Australian professional polo player, and his family.

His other sporting passion, apart from rugby, is golf. Be warned, he is "rather good" at golf, as well! Let's just say a handicap of 4...

"WILL SOMEONE PLEASE REMIND ME WHAT I THOUGHT IT WAS WHITE, BUT I'M SURE THERE



It simply has to be the quote of the close season. The rain was lashing horizontally in monsoon proportions. Phil Greening later described it as 'a bit like playing at home', but one knows what he meant. The England pack were in the process of driving the New Zealanders several furlongs down the field. Stuart Barnes needed to explain the phenomenon, and didn't have to rack his brains very hard to do so.

England lost the game in the end, of course, but they came closer to a wining that horrible morning than they did on any other match on that disastrous, ill-conceived tour. Indeed they were actually 10-8 up at half time, and for a while, one even had the feeling that they might nick it.

The fact that they didn't casts no reflections on the efforts of the pack whatsoever. It began to look as if, at last, England had found a front five which might be able to take on the All Blacks up front.

And Phil Vickery wasn't even playing!

Five other Gloucester forwards were, though: Tony Windo, Phil Greening, Dave Sims, Rob Fidler and Steve Ojomoh, and every one of them looked as if they should never be out of the England side.

That was the one saving grace about the whole sorry expedition. Even before the party set off, most people understood that you can't expect to take on the three best sides in the world in rapid succession with a side shattered by injuries - diplomatic and otherwise, some people suspect - and unavailabilities. It was always going to be a disaster, and so it was.

Except for the performances of Gloucester's Magnificent Seven. Reputations may have been shattered, egos bruised, young hopefuls sent back to learn a bit more, but the Kingsholm contingent can hold their heads very high indeed. Gloucester must have been the only rugby-playing area in England that wasn't wearing a collective black armband at the end of the tour. Every one of the seven made a more than demanded contribution, and the England organisation owes them a debt of gratitude which one hopes will be remembered as this season's Internationals roll around, and as the World Cup looms ever closer.

PHIL VICKERY was, of course, the man in possession. He has

always looked the genuine article, and he certainly proved that to be the case. As one TV commentator observed, he simply got better and better as the tour went on.

And remember, he's still a comparative infant in prop forward terms. The days when a prop could give a good account of himself until he almost reached forty years old may have gone, but it's still a position where an enormous amount of technical know-how is necessary, as well as strength, fitness and agility. It takes time to become streetwise.

Mike Burton used to say that you didn't know how to play at prop until you'd turned out on a slagheap somewhere outside Aberavon on a wet Wednesday night, but even he would concede that spending weeks overcoming the onslaughts of Australians, New Zealanders and South Africans, on their own patches, makes for a pretty fair apprenticeship.

Perhaps we could have wished that PHIL GREENING had had more opportunity to stake his claim for a regular Test spot, but he certainly seized those chances he did have with enormous enthusiasm and energy. Indeed, you could say he rather overdid it at times, but you can't really blame him for that. A combination of his own craving for a permanent berth and the high-voltage hype which surrounded every match didn't actually

AT COLOURS ENGLAND ARE PLAYING IN ? E'S A CHERRY STRIPE IN THERE SOMEWHERE !"

(S. Barnes Esq. Commentating on England v. New Zealand 'A', Saturday June 13th 1998.)



encourage him to take on the aspect of a shrinking violet.

However, the trip can't have done him any harm at all. He will have undoubtedly learned a great deal, and his opponents during this season's campaign are sure to feel the effects of that. With luck, this could just be his season, whatever Messrs Cockerill and

others have to say about it.

A few eyebrows were raised when TONY WINDO became a last minute selection, and it's a shame that the decision forced him to withdraw from the Barbarians tour. However, those same eyebrows must have disappeared up into the thinning hairlines when he demonstrated

just how good a player he is.

I suppose there was never a realistic chance that we would claim a Test spot, barring injuries, but he certainly impressed during the games in which he did demonstrate his trenchant and formidable presence.

It came as no surprise to us of course, having watched him do

Continued from previous page

the business against every reputable prop in the land over the last few seasons, and I suppose that his selection must have pleased everyone in Gloucester more than that of anyone else. He surely deserved his chance —and took it. It is to be hoped that the Powers That Be have taken due note, and that he won't be relegated to the International sidelines now that the home season is upon us.

It wasn't so surprising that DAVE SIMS was selected for the trip. Indeed, it has always been a mystery to some of us why he hasn't been an ever-present in England squads for years now.

It may have been injury and suspension which allowed him into the Test sides, but once there - did he ever seize his chance !

The interesting thing was that you might have been watching him at Kingsholm. He did everything in his efficient, knowledgeable way, always appearing in the right place and the right time, performing admirably against the acknowledged best line-out jumpers in the world, and displaying that air of authority to which we have become so accustomed over the years. In fact, he looked the complete lock forward: the player we have known, and who has been so unlucky not to have received a Cap or two before now.

Clive Woodward must have breathed a secret sigh of relief when Garath Archer failed to

recover from injury in time for the South African Test. So effective had the combination of Sims and ROB FIDLER been in the second New Zealand game, that it would have been unjust and tactically unsound to have split it up, even for the formidable Archer to continue his career. Again, perhaps 'Fids' was a trifle fortunate to make the side, but certainly looked the part when he got there.

Rob must have felt himself supremely blessed to be able to join the fray alongside 'Our Dad' Dave Sims, continuing the partnership which has been frightening the life out of lock combinations all over the country for a year or two. In the two Tests in which he played, he looked as if he had been doing the business for England for years. He was always up with the ball, and came close to scoring himself on occasion. He should have a glittering International career ahead of him, and an extra season to prepare should make him a natural for the World Cup squad.

Perhaps the most remarkable story is that of STEVE OJOMOH. This time last year, he wasn't even playing first team rugby, in spite of having eleven England Caps under his belt. They say he needed motivation, but it's another measure of the Richard Hill magic that he found it after he moved to Kingsholm.

Anyone who saw him playing for Gloucester at the end of last season will have marvelled at his

renaissance. He looked sharp, fast and positively terrifying at times, here there and everywhere, creating mayhem wherever he went. Nevertheless, it seemed a little early to expect him to return to the International fold, so it was a considerable bonus for us when he made the squad.

Even without the presence of Mr. Delaligio and Neil Back, Steve probably faced the sternest competition for a place of any of the Gloucester lads, but he stuck to his guns and played his heart out. One of my favourite memories of the tour was the sight of Jonah Lomu being flattened by Steve early on in the New Zealand game. Lomu didn't look his old self for the rest of the match, and got his drop shortly thereafter.

Steve Ojomoh might be a comparatively new Elver Eater, but he certainly did us proud in the Southern Hemisphere.

SCOTT BENTON had played himself into the tour reckoning before the end of last season, so it wasn't an enormous surprise when he was selected. The appointment of Dawson as Captain may have been a shrewd move in the scheme of things, but it must have come as a blow to Scotty, because it obviously restricted his chances.

Nevertheless, when injury kept the Skipper out of the ill-starred Australian Test, Scott played his part manfully. Quite frankly, the character who wrote the 'Citizen' article on the game, in the absence

of Katie Coker, must have been watching a different game from the one which was shown on my telly. He seemed to be trying to excuse the shortcomings of the England side at outside-half and centre by blaming it all on the scrum-half, which was unjust and manifestly absurd.

Thereafter, Scott Benton did himself no harm at all in the limited opportunities he got. Always forthright, always abrasive, a pain in the neck for his opposite number - in fact the Scotty Benton we know and love in these parts.

They did us proud, all the lot of them. And it's six more little International daggers on the team sheet, isn't it? Wonder where the next one will come from.

TAILPIECE

Did you notice that Terry Fanolua, Scott Benton and Richard Tombs all turned out for Brimpsfield Cricket Club's Second XI recently?

Apparently the star turned out to be 'Teza' Fanolua, who hadn't played for years, turned out to be the star, making an undefeated 40 and taking 4-46.

Has anyone told David Graveney?

THE PERFECT TEAM



Wicliffe and Rover
Quality Cars and a quality dealership.
The finest in new and used cars, Service and parts.



Wicliffe Rover
Mercia Rd, Gloucester
01452 529531

FOR ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE COUNTRIES
BEST SELLING SPORTS CAR - SALES SERVICING
OR REPAIRS, CALL WICLIFFE MG



DRIVE YOUR AMBITION

HOME OF THE GREAT
BRITISH SPORTS CAR



Wicliffe MG
Mercia Rd, Gloucester
01452 529531

PLAYER PROFILE

It seems only common courtesy to start this season's Player Profiles with a piece about the Captain - even if it is his second time round in that most demanding of responsibilities.

When Dave Sims finally got his Cap, on the ill-starred England tour, I should think that the cheers from Gloucestershire must have been heard in Dunedin. An ever-present in successive England 'A' teams, even the normally phlegmatic 'Simmo' himself must have despaired at times, of ever reaching the status of a full International. The fact that he seemed, at times to have a genius for getting injured just at the wrong moment didn't help either.

Sheer quality will tell in the end, however, and Dave Sims has finally made it. What's more, he did it in a style which must have made many people wonder where England had been keeping him all these years.

Indeed, Dave has been a formidable presence in the Gloucester side for so long that there is a tendency to overestimate how old he is. In fact, he won't achieve his 29th birthday until next November, so there are quite a few seasons of top-flight rugby in him yet.

Even his famous nickname, 'Our Dad' doesn't refer to his age. In fact, it was instigated on the day his young son Nathaniel put in an appearance, having managed to get himself born just about 40 minutes before kick-off on a home match day. The new Dad just about managed to get out on the field in time for the start, and before any ladies start to bristle, I am given to understand that it was his wife, Jill, who despatched him from the Maternity Unit to Kingsholm in short order.

Hence the 'Our Dad' sobriquet. The incident also provoked a universal cry of "One for the boy, Simmo !" for weeks afterwards, whenever the ball was thrown into the line-out.

Dave Sims' great strength has always been his sheer authority around the field. It isn't just a matter of physical presence, although at 6'6" and 19 st. that's formidable enough. There

is an air about him, a feeling that you're up against a real giant of the game, who knows just what he's doing, and knows it better than you do. This presence made him a very distinguished Captain, and will again. It must be very reassuring for a young, relatively inexperienced, player to have Dave in charge.

Dave Sims came to Kingsholm from Longlevens, and he's also played for Sunnybank in Australia. He is a great fan of his wife's and his Mum's cooking, and likes nothing better than spending time with his family and socialising generally.

Best of luck for the season, 'Simmo'. We're all rooting for you.

DAVE SIMS

22



WHAT DO THEY LOOK LIKE



Nathan Carter



Mark Cornwell



Andy Dawling



Andy Deacon



Simon Devereux



Ed Pearce



Terry Fanolua



Rob Fidler



Chris Fortey



Pete Glanville



Phil Greening



Brian Johnson



Simon Mannix



Scott Benton



Laurie Beck



Audley Lumsden



Nick Osman



Steve Ojomoh



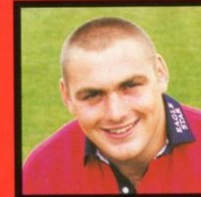
Philippe Saint-Andre



Richard Tombs



Richard Ward



Trevor Woodman



Dave Sims



Tony Windo



Phil Vickery



Chris Catling



Mark Mapletoft



Neil McCarthy



GLOUCESTER



LONDON IRISH



15	Chris Catling
14	Brian Johnson
13	Terry Fanolua*
12	Richard Tombs*
11	Philippe Saint-Andre*
10	Mark Mapletoft
9	Scott Benton*
1	Trevor Woodman
2	Neil McCarthy
3	Phil Vickery*
4	Rob Fidler*
5	Dave Sims*
6	Steve Ojomoh*
7	Nathan Carter
8	Simon Devereux
16	Laurie Beck
17	Simon Mannix*
18	Rob Jewell
19	Chris Fortey
20	Andy Deacon
21	Mark Cornwell
22	Andrew Hazell

Full Back
Right Wing
Centre
Centre
Left Wing

Outside Half
Scrum Half

Prop
Hooker
Prop
Lock
Lock
Flanker
Flanker
No. 8

Replacements

*Captain

*Denotes international

*Conor O'Shea	15
*Justin Bishop	14
*Brendan Venter	13
Nick Burrows	12
*Niall Woods	11
Matt Jones	10
Peter Richards	9
Peter Rogers	1
Richard Kirke	2
*Rob Llardwick	3
Nick Harvey	4
*Malcolm O'Kelly	5
Jake Boer	6
*Kieron Dawson	7
Kevin Spicer	8
Mike Worsley	16
Mike Howe	17
Kristyan Fullman	18
Matt Jarvis	19
Kieran Campbell	20
James Brown	21
Robert Todd	22

Referees
TBA