

GLOUCESTER

V

**LONDON
IRISH**



**Sunday 26
December 1999
Kick-off 3.00pm**



**Who is
Gloucester's
Player of the
Century?**

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Gloucester

Issue 8 - £2.00

Gloucester RFC Official Programme 1999-2000 Season

Welcome from The Editors

A Warm Welcome

Boxing Day! So bring on the OMT's. Must catch that bus - the number 8 runs every fifteen minutes on Boxing Day, and it diverts to Kingsholm when there's a match!

That was 50 years ago, when the postman and milkman came on Christmas Day! The OMT's are, alas, long gone as the traditional Boxing Day fixture and as for the bus ... the 8 is the 10, no service on Boxing Day and no route is divert to Kingsholm on match day!

However, we do have London Irish this Boxing Day. Now if there is one Premiership club that would mould in with Kingsholm on Boxing Day, it must be our guests today.

They like their rugby ... no, they are passionate about their rugby! Do their supporters have attitude?, the reason for going to a rugby match is to celebrate afterwards and only the Irish would think to celebrate coming second! Yes, they have attitude.

So welcome. May the best team win and the bars are open in the clubhouse!

Here we are almost at the end of the 20th century. The 19th

century ended at Kingsholm with three successive wins. Old Merchant Taylors visited on Boxing Day 1899 and were duly dispatched 16-3. The following day, December 27th, the players were in action again, this time defeating Cinderford 21-0.

The last game of the century saw Penarth at Kingsholm on December 30, the Welsh club heading back on the train to Cardiff nursing a 26-0 defeat. Three games at Kingsholm in five days ... Gloucester 63, Opponents 3.

Gloucester entered the 20th century in style. Eight matches were played at Kingsholm between January 1 and the end of the season. And Gloucester 'leaked' just 17 points in those eight outings, six were won, one was drawn and one lost.

The eight away matches brought five wins and three losses, the opponents scoring 61 points. The losses, incidentally, were to Swansea, Cardiff and Llanelli who scored a combined 61 points).

Interestingly, Gloucester has six scheduled home matches and seven away and this, of course, takes no account of a cup run or the Shield knockout stages. If the new century can bring Gloucester the form that the first few months of this century

brought, then one Philippe Saint-André will be walking up the River Severn in front of the bore as Stephen Jones of the Sunday Times writes even nicer things about Kingsholm - the only English ground that made his top twenty grounds in the world to watch a rugby match.

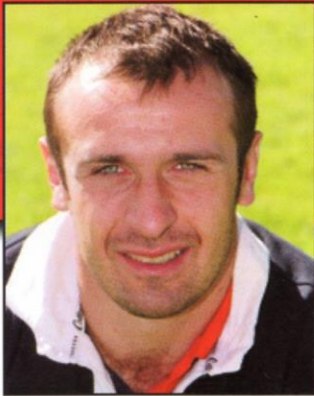
But Kingsley Jones warns in his Captain's Comments (page 19) that there is a long way to go before we can seriously talk about a title challenge. But it's nice to dream.

And while we are dreaming of a white (wash of) Bath, it is perhaps appropriate to suggest that you might like to consider arriving earlier than normal for the Cup match on January 3.

As you know, it is an 'all ticket' match and all the tickets are expected to have been sold by the time you read this.

That means some 10,800 people will be coming. There are bound to be queues. We ask you to be patient.

This match is being shown live on television and kick-off is at 4.15 p.m. Immediately following the final whistle, the draw for the following round will be made here at Kingsholm, the first time the draw has been made away from Twickenham.



Coach's Viewpoint

Phillipe Saint-André

"As the year draws to a close, I would like to thank you all for the support that you have shown me - and more importantly, for the support you have shown for the team."

This is a very important week for us! We are top of the Allied Dunbar Premiership and wins against London Irish today and against Bedford on Wednesday evening will see us top at the halfway stage - and we will be top as we go into the 21st Century!

On the playing side, we all know this. We all know just what is at stake.

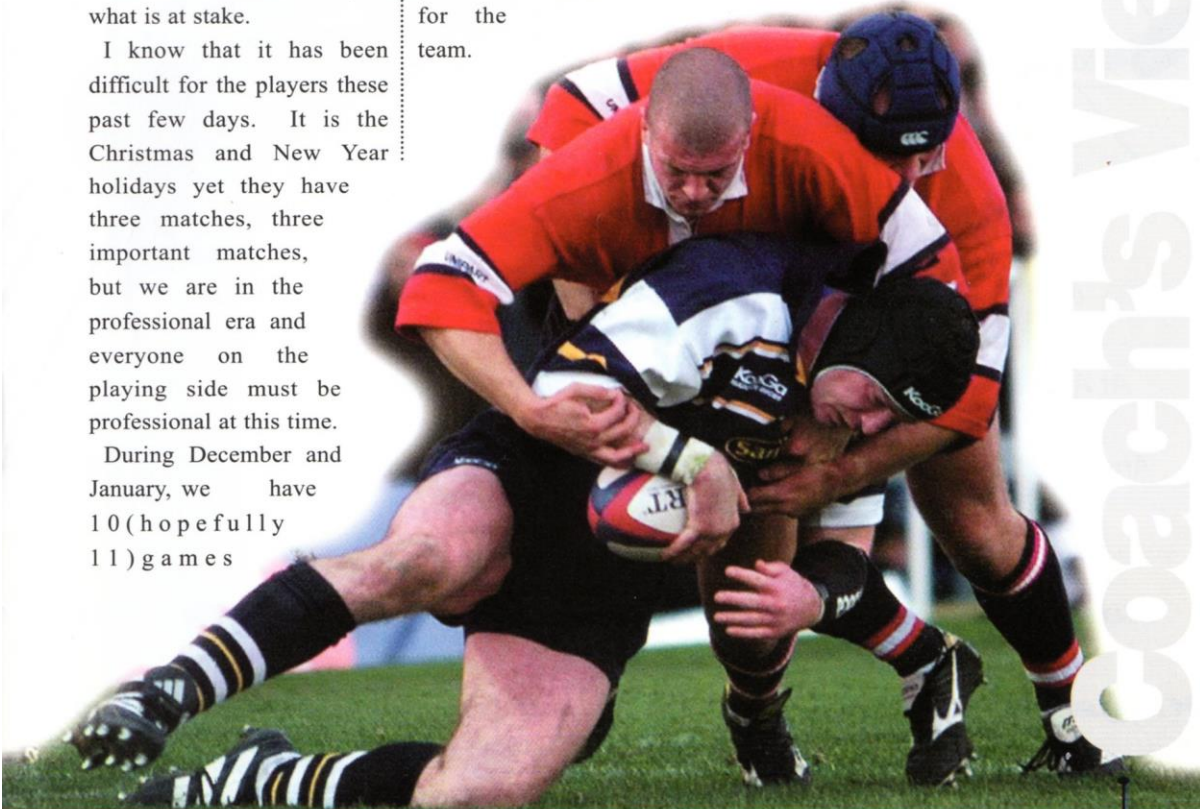
I know that it has been difficult for the players these past few days. It is the Christmas and New Year holidays yet they have three matches, three important matches, but we are in the professional era and everyone on the playing side must be professional at this time.

During December and January, we have 10 (hopefully 11) games

during December and January. This is a really tough schedule for players in a contact sport like rugby but it is the same for all Premiership clubs!.

As the year draws to a close, I would like to thank you all for the support that you have shown me - and more importantly, for the support you have shown for the team.

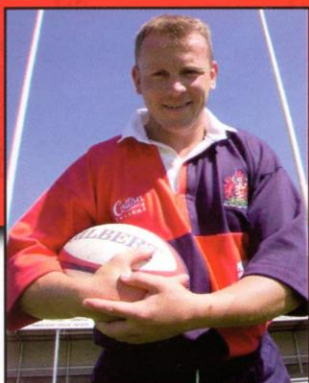
We have enjoyed your support this season for four months here at Kingsholm and also as far away as Madrid. With your continued support I feel that we can bring Heineken Cup rugby to Kingsholm next season. Nothing in sport is certain - but that is still our aim.



Coach's Viewpoint

Captain's Comment

Kingsley Jones



"Looking back on the season so far, it has really been a lot better than we hoped for. Here we are going into today's match sitting on top of the league, two points clear!"

Yes, it is nice to be there at Christmas - but let us not read too much into it. You see, there is a long way to go.

We came together well as a team in the early stages of the season - and this was good as there were a number of new lads who had joined us during the summer. We are still building and still becoming a team!

I think the most disappointing thing so far was the slip-up at Wasps, though a lot of people would say that the Bath loss was more disappointing, because it means more to the fans.

But we did play poorly at Wasps and we lost by four points. Certainly, it was a game we could

have won. We slipped up for ten minutes either side of half-time and that cost us a game which could have put us in a great position today, with only one loss in the league!

Down at Bath we again did not play well and lost by 13 points - I would not put that one down as one we could have won.

The law of averages says that we will slip up again and it's bound to happen, but let's hope that we can continue winning at Kingsholm and pinching some away wins.

One away match that I have a good feeling about is Leicester. I have played at Welford Road before and I have never lost at that ground. It was the same with Bristol, I had played there three or four times and had

never lost. I had this feeling before we went down to the Memorial Stadium and we won there!

All I hope is that I haven't put a jinx on it by saying this!

There can be little doubt that we are on target for a top five place at the end of the season - but we can't be complacent.

Every so often one has to assess goals. We have reached our first goal and we're on course for our second. If we reach that, then comes a third goal. If we continue the way we are going, the time will come when our reassessment will suggest a challenge for the title.

But we are a few games away from that, I feel that here on Boxing Day it is unrealistic to start thinking about being title contenders. After our home game against Bristol at the end of January we will sit down, look at what we have got coming up and set another goal.

You see, the short term goals are important for reaching long term ones. But right now, the season has been all that I could have wished for. And the support we have had has been really fantastic. What really sticks in my mind is the support we had at Northampton - there was a World Cup semi-final on television, but to all those supporters of ours at the ground, Glaws comes first!



Gloucester action versus Bristol

Player Profile

Simon Mannix

Simon Mannix admits that he is "loving it" at Kingsholm. He is now settling and says that "it's getting better".

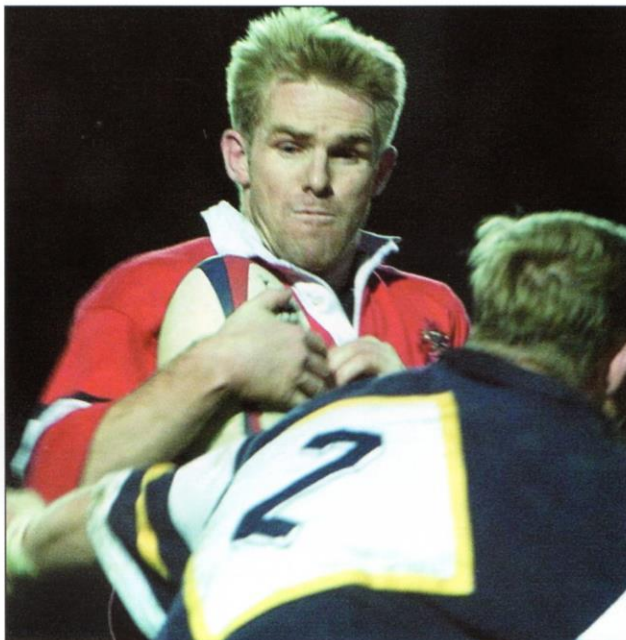
He's not the sort of person to try to sweep under the carpet the fact that he took quite a lot of stick from The Shed in the early part of the season.

At a recent 'Question Time' in the club with supporters, who assured him that he was among friends, he did say something about the best way to answer critics was by playing well! But the truth of the matter is that the resurgent Mannix is a form of pay-back to a player he first met in 1990 and then played against in 1994 - a certain French winger called Philippe Saint-André.

"Philippe had belief in me - I know I have to repay that faith," Mannix said. "I reckon I am halfway to doing just that."

Little did Mannix know 10 years ago that he would be meeting up with Saint-Andre at Kingsholm and little did he know that Kingsholm would be something of a 'reunion' for a number of teammates and opponents of the past.

There is the already reported meeting of the two Kiwi schoolboys, Mannix and Elton Moncrieff - Moncrieff was at St. Patrick's School in Wellington



and Mannix was at St. Patrick's School in the nearby town of Silverstream. They were opponents and they played together for Wellington School.

In addition, Mannix also came across Richard Tombs and Junior Parramore - not forgetting Ian Jones - before leaving for Europe. "About the only Southern Hemisphere player I hadn't come across was Terry (Fanolua)," he added.

Mannix started playing rugby when he was just four years old, which even today is not unusual. "In those day, it was full tackle," he remembered. "But it's changed now. There was a mixture of club and schools

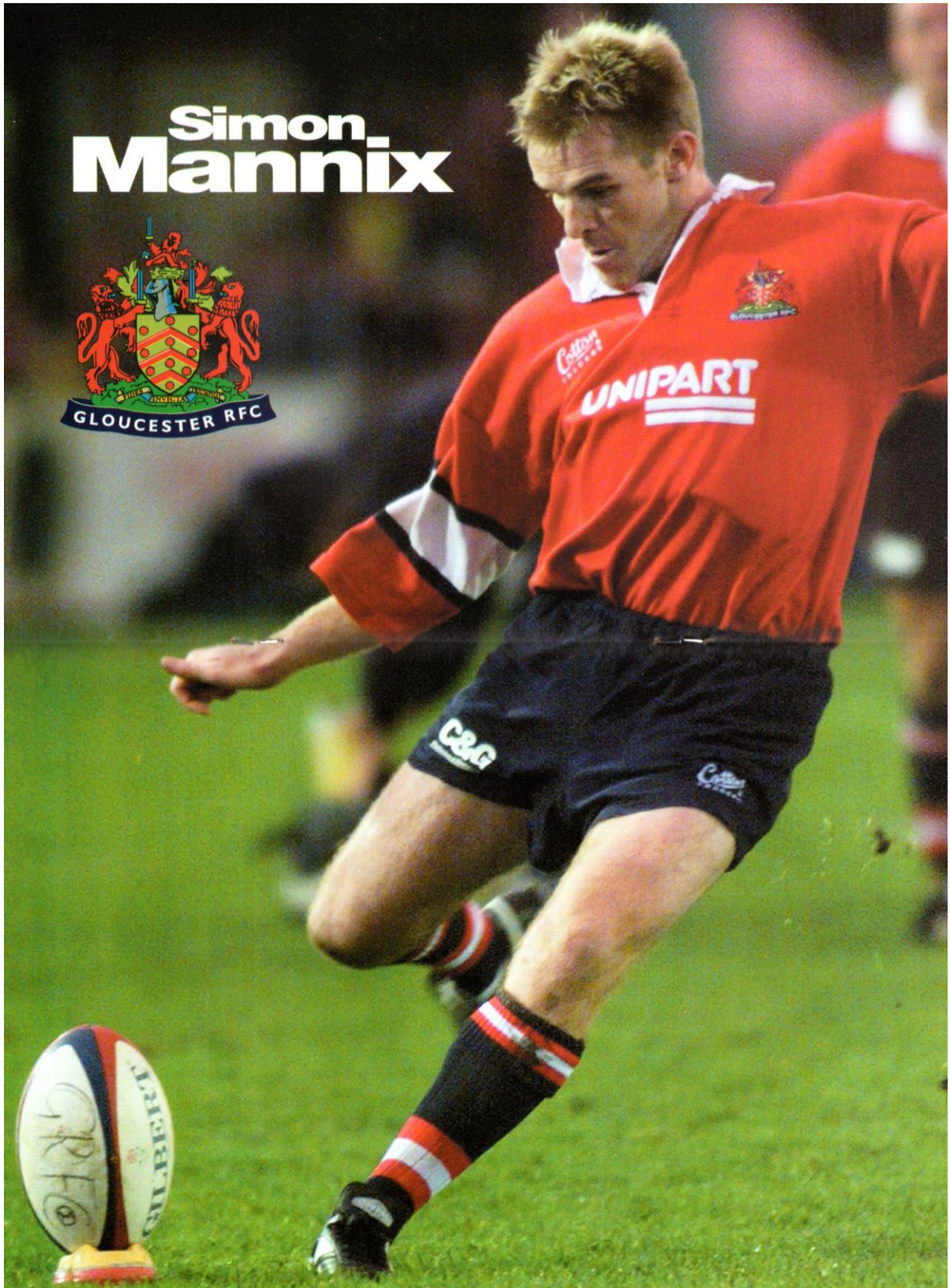
rugby, from the age of 13 I was at St. Patrick's School and I was lucky enough to play for Wellington School against Japanese schools, a game that we only just won," he remembered.

From school Mannix went on to the Petone club in Wellington in 1990 and was selected to the New Zealand under-21 squad, where he met Martin Johnson, now of England and Leicester Tigers.

As an All Black, Mannix got just one cap - in the first Test against France (and Saint-Andre) in 1994.

But he did play in a further 10 'uncapped' matches for the All Blacks during tours.

Simon Mannix



Mike Weaver Reviews....

Who would have believed it? Gloucester now stand within reach of the unique honour of entering the new millennium as England's top club - what greater incentive could there be to overcome the Irish today?

I must admit that every time I catch a glimpse of the current league table I really have to pinch myself. Somehow, after all those seasons of struggling to dive into the murky, yet safe, anonymity of mid-table, emerging through the clouds at the summit of the league seems quite unreal.

After having clung on for dear life on professional rugby's roller-coaster for so long, we must all have felt sick to death of it at times, but at this precise moment in time it seems like the most exhilarating ride on earth!

Even the national press seems to be revising some of its opinions about our club. Stephen Jones' feature 'From Home Boys to Culture Club' in the Sunday Times a fortnight ago was a well-balanced and thoughtful insight into how Gloucester have transformed themselves from the under-achieving local team of the nineties into a successful and hugely promising cosmopolitan outfit. Crucially he highlighted how, throughout the process, the Gloucester team has been singularly successful in retaining

something of the traditional dogged spirit which is due in no small part to the close relationship with the supporters.

It is this rapport, together with the players' camaraderie and willingness to give everything for the cherry and white cause, which has seen us through the rough times that is now, at long last, starting to bring rewards.

Still, we shouldn't forget the widespread 'expert' prediction back in September, which had reserved 10th place for Gloucester. Philippe certainly seems to have taken this assessment to heart and is making it his personal goal to make the experts eat their words.

Recent results in the league and the European Shield have demonstrated that the club now has genuine strength in depth as well as the character to perform well away.

Perhaps now, as demonstrated in the first half at the Brewery Field a fortnight ago, complacency is the main enemy, but I'm sure Philippe and captain Kingsley will have had a few quiet words with the squad to head off that danger.

By the way, did you notice how everyone is now automatically starting to regard away matches as winnable?. It's amazing what a good run of results can do re-invigorate everyone's belief! Gloucester are entering the new century as

a genuinely professional club - not only with a full complement of full-time professional players, but with the imminent changes off the field following the EGM we are also getting things together behind the scenes as well.

Whilst we are all keenly celebrating Philippe's decision to commit himself to the club for a further 2 years, we shouldn't forget the priceless contribution Richard Hill made to the club as he started to dismantle the 'Iron Curtain' which stood between the club and the professional era. After all the effort that has been put in over the past year, I wonder how many more players will be leaving Kingsholm bemoaning the club's 'lack of professionalism?'

So, a new century brings fresh hope for Gloucester supporters. The faces, the shirts and even the very structure of our game may have changed over the past 127 years, but somehow the spirit lives on.

How long will it last? Well, rugby union being the unpredictable animal it is, we should perhaps enjoy it all whilst we can.

Finally, as ever I'll be reserving my biggest cheers for my old mate Kris Fullman. Despite playing for his native Gloucester as a colt many moons ago, he decided to join Bristol where he made his ADP1 debut and remained a loyal servant throughout the 1997-8 season.

Mike Weaver

Tom Voyce	
	
England Appearances	
27 (Won 19, Drew 3, Lost 5) Points 15 - 5 Tries	
British Lions Appearances	
2 (Won 0, Drew 1, Lost 1)	
Points 6 - 1 Try, 1 Penalty-goal	
Grand Slams 1921, 1923, 1924	

Gloucester Player of the Century

What a decision, who is Gloucester's player of the 20th century? There are a few in the running but, most who took part in our unscientific straw poll agreed on the man who 'invented' back row play...Tom Voyce. Supporter Alan Kear of Hucclecote has kindly put pen to paper...

Tom Voyce - Pirate Of Gloucester

One of the great Gloucester players was Tom Voyce, a man who enjoyed every honour the game could offer him. This is the stuff that legends are made of.

A slim, wiry man he was regarded as the foremost flanker in the country. He possessed pace, safe hands and an uncanny sense of position, skills which made him an essential part of the English sides of 1921, '23 and '24 - Grand Slam seasons. One of the most popular players of his time, his gingery, wavy hair made him a favourite with the cartoonists of the day, invariably he was portrayed as a pirate of the rugby field. The cherry and white colours, complemented the buccaneering expression on his face.

1924 Lions

Voyce's quick thinking proved an asset not only on the field of play, but off it as well. There came a day when a touring team, on it's way from one venue to the next by train, found that a coach had caught alight. Voyce was equal to the occasion.

He scrambled forward from one carriage to the next and finally, confronted by the tender, climbed it. Balanced on the coal, he yelled at the driver, who was dutifully doing his thing in the cab and heard nothing. It was time for drastic measures. Voyce grabbed a lump of coal and heaved it. His aim was true. The driver 'copped it' and the train was stopped.

Voyce was held back by injuries on the 1924 tour, though his versatility was a talking point among the South Africans. Indeed, at one time during the trip he was used as an emergency full-back. When Voyce finally forced his way into the test team near the end of the series, his extra speed and determined play added steel to the Lions' efforts. He was also the leading British points scorer of the tour.

Barbarians

Although declining the invitation to play over Easter on many occasions he did, for the first time, take part on the tour of 1923-24. Voyce recalled...

'... I was much amused to learn what happened on Monday. My name was down for the match but I had to return to Gloucester. The match at Swansea was not very old when the referee suddenly blew his whistle, 'offside Voyce!' he said.

There was an immediate outburst of laughter from all the players - who, of

course, knew I wasn't playing! Referee's prejudice, if ever there was!

England

Voyce, one of the first of many 'internationals' from the English Schools' Union (founded 1904) to win a senior cap, played the spoiling game to perfection, usually looking after the scrum-half on the blind side. He excelled in the loose, but it was said of him that he never pushed in the scrum - except in front of the stand containing the selectors! Voyce had started on a career that earned him twenty-seven successive caps. England won 17-9 at Swansea in 1924, and the tearaway Tom Voyce suffered a broken rib, although this did not prevent him from playing extremely well. The Welsh enjoyed his West Country vigour and marked him closely, but he came up smiling every time, even if badly bruised!

In the 1926 match against Scotland at Twickenham, Voyce's try was a memorable effort, the flanker dragging himself over the line with two Scots hanging on to him. The risk he took in playing with only one effective eye reflects his devotion to the game. He served the Gloucester club and the RFU with distinction and was president of the Union in 1960-61 (the fifty third president).



Player of the Century

Peter Arnold

Nostalgia Time

Peter Arnold

December 26th always was a notable date in Gloucester's rugby calendar. It was the day when yer average Shedhead emerged from his slightly bilious Christmas cocoon and dispelled the cobwebs by cheering on an afternoon of festive rugby which no one took too seriously.

Those were the days when Britannia waived the rules and Boxing Day was Boxing Day. It was the occasion when the massed ranks of Old Merchant Tailors would descend on us, resplendent in their black three-piece suits and straw boaters, shout loudly as their side get a right royal run around, and then retire to the bar in search of healing waters appropriate to the season - all in an enormous spirit of high good humour. And don't knock it, there were days when OMT's could turn out a side which included the odd International or three. I even remember one game when their scrum-half became the first player to turn out in contact lenses. Of course, the modern game does not allow for such fripperies, more's the pity. Today's match is all about Premiership points, and our welcome guests from London Irish will be well aware of the fact that they are taking on the League Leaders in their own stronghold. I shouldn't think that there will be much seasonal goodwill in evidence from either side.

Back in September, Irish were tipped as one of the sides who might be contesting the Championship this

season. They still might, of course, but they haven't really performed as well as their pre-season publicity suggested they might, although they can point to one or two notable scalps. They would dearly love to add Gloucester to their trophy list.

And, of course, today is Sunday. Not unusual nowadays, but not so long ago it was almost unheard of to play on the Sabbath. In fact, on the first occasion when I remember Gloucester entertaining anyone in anger, so to speak, on a Sunday, London Irish provided the opposition.

Back in the '80's (I think) there was one season when Gloucester and Irish were the only two unbeaten sides in first class rugby. The Kingsholm encounter was, therefore, eagerly awaited by both camps. Unfortunately, the weather went bad on us and the game was frosted off.

The fixture list, at the time, was just about as congested as it is now and the only date which both sides could agree for the rearranged game fell on a Sunday. There was a degree of 'shock, horror' about the decision in some circles, I recall.

Nevertheless, the match went ahead and Gloucester won it. Not that the loss fazed the Irish at all. "Ah well!", their Chairman told me, "If we had to lose, I'd rather it was to you boys than some bloody Welsh outfit!" I don't know what he had against the Welsh, but here we are again, playing London Irish on a Sunday. Perhaps nostalgia, while not what it used to be, is not quite dead after all.

BEST NEWS OF THE YEAR

The disruption of printing schedules, caused by the Great British Shutdown, has meant that this is the first opportunity I've had to comment about what is undoubtedly the best news of the year for Gloucester RFC and its supporters. The report that Philippe Saint André has extended his contract for a further two seasons certainly brightened the traditional 'Dark Days Before Christmas'.

We may have our differences with France at the moment, but one French import which no one in their right mind would want to ban is Monsieur Saint André. Ever since he made his Kingsholm debut, and scored two scorching tries against Bristol, he has become just as much one of us as if he were born and bred in Coney Hill. He took over the management of the rugby at Gloucester when the club was an unhappy place to be. We were under-achieving, were weak in some positions and there were rumours of factions splitting the club at all levels. Philippe's was a daunting task to take on for anyone, let alone someone from hundreds of miles away who couldn't even claim English as his first language.

In the event, the club's progress has been little short of phenomenal. 'Le Patron' hasn't been afraid to take some very tough and unpopular decisions, his signings have been shrewd, to say the least, and while his selections have raised a few eyebrows now and then, he's generally been proved right.

Thanks a lot, Philippe.

Gloucester Squad



Laurie Beck



Debut:
1990 v Lydney.
Honours:
England Under-21s, South West Under-21s and Gloucestershire.

date of birth	2/1/71
height	5ft 10in
weight	12st 12lb
position	Scrum-Half
former club	Cheltenham

Adam Eustace



Debut:
1999 v Leeds.
Honours:
England Under-21s and Under-19s.

date of birth	9/1/79
height	6ft 4in
weight	16st 7lb
position	Back-Row/Lock
former club	Widden Old Boys

Tom Beim



Debut:
1996/7 v Sale.
Honours:
England, England A and Emerging England North.

date of birth	11/12/75
height	6ft
weight	14st
position	Wing
former club	Sale

Mark Cornwell



Debut:
1994 v Lydney.
Honours:
England Under-21s, South West Under-21s and Gloucestershire.

date of birth	22/2/73
height	6ft 7in
weight	17st 13lb
position	Lock
former club	Old Richians

Joe Ewens



Debut:
1999 v Begles-Bordeaux.
Honours:
England A and England Under-21's.

date of birth	16/12/77
height	5ft 11in
weight	14st 2lb
position	Centre
former club	Bedford

Chris Catling



Debut:
1996 v Pontypridd.
Honours:
England A, Students, England Under-21s and Schools.

date of birth	17/6/76
height	6ft 2in
weight	14st 2lb
position	Full-Back
former club	Exeter

Andy Deacon



Debut:
1988.
Honours:
England A, Barbarians, Emerging England and Gloucestershire.

date of birth	31/7/65
height	6ft 2in
weight	17st 8lb
position	Tighthead Prop
former club	Longlevens

Terry Fanolua



Debut:
1997 v Begles-Bordeaux.
Honours:
Samoa.

date of birth	3/7/74
height	6ft 1in
weight	13st 8lb
position	Centre
former club	Auckland



Rob Fidler




Debut:
1994 v Cheltenham.

Honours:
England (2), England A, U-21s, Colts, and U-18s.

date of birth	21/9/74
height	6ft 5in
weight	17st 8lb
position	Lock
former club	Cheltenham

Tai Glassie




Debut:
1999 v Cardiff.

Honours:
New South Wales All Schools and Sydney Schools.

date of birth	10.6.71
height	6ft 3in
weight	16st 5lb
position	Wing
former club	Gordon (Aus)

Andrew Hazell




Debut:
1997/8 v Newcastle.

Honours:
England U-21s, South West-U21s and U19s.

date of birth	25/4/78
height	6ft
weight	14st 7lb
position	Back-Row
former club	Hayle

Chris Fortey



Debut:
1995 v Lydney.

Representative Honours:
Barbarians, South West Under-21s and Colts.

date of birth	25/8/75
height	5ft 11in
weight	16st 3lb
position	Hooker
former club	Widden Old Boys

Joe Goatley



Honours:
South West Under-18s and Gloucestershire U-16s.

date of birth	23/10/80
height	6ft 1in
weight	13st 3lb
position	Outside-Half
former club	Old Richians

Brian Johnson




Debut:
1997 v Newcastle.

Honours:
England A, Combined Services, Army and England.

date of birth	22/7/72
height	5ft 11in
weight	12st 6lb
position	Wing
former club	Newbury

Peter Glanville




Debut:
1992 v Northampton.

Honours:
South West, and Gloucestershire.

date of birth	10/6/71
height	6ft 3in
weight	16st 3lb
position	Blindside Flanker
former club	Longlevens

Adam Harris




Debut:
1992 v Northampton.

Honours:
South West, and Gloucestershire.

date of birth	4/7/78
height	6ft 6in
weight	17st 2lb
position	Outside Half
former club	Hayle

Byron Hayward



Representative Honours:
Wales 2, Wales A (13).

date of birth	22/02/70
height	5ft 8in
weight	13st 2lb
position	Full-back / Fly-half
former club	Llanelli


Gloucester Squad



Gloucester Squad

Ian Jones

Honours:
New Zealand.




date of birth	17/4/67
height	6ft 6in
weight	16st 5lb
position	Lock
former club	Waikato Chiefs

Kingsley Jones

Debut:
1998 v Leicester.

Honours:
Wales and Wales A.




date of birth	19/6/70
height	6ft
weight	15st 10lb
position	Back-Row
former club	Cross Keys

Neil McCarthy

Debut:
1997 v Begles-Bordeaux


Honours:
England, England A, U-21s, U-19s, and Under 16s.



date of birth	29/11/74
height	5ft 9in
weight	16st
position	Hooker
former club	Bedford

Junior Paramore

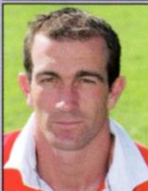
Honours:
Western Samoa.



date of birth	18/11/68
height	6ft 2in
weight	16st 7lb
position	Back-Row
former club	Bedford

Martyn Kimber

Debut:
1994 v West Hartlepool.




date of birth	20/9/68
height	6ft
weight	14st
position	Fly-Half
former club	Stroud

Elton Moncrieff

Debut:
1999 v Cardiff.

Honours:
Super 12's.




date of birth	8/6/72
height	5ft 7in
weight	12st 8lb
position	Scrum-Half
former club	Queensland

Ed Pearce

Debut:
1996 v Newbridge.

Honours:
England Under-21s.




date of birth	2/9/75
height	6ft 6in
weight	19st 5lb
position	Back-Row
former club	Bath

Simon Mannix

Debut:
1998 v Richmond.

Honours:
New Zealand and Barbarians.




date of birth	10/8/72
height	5ft 9in
weight	13st 3lb
position	Fly Half/Centre
former club	Sale

Steve Ojomoh

Debut:
1998 v Wasps.

Honours:
England, England A, U-21s, Colts and Barbarians.



date of birth	25/5/70
height	6ft 2in
weight	16st 4lb
position	Back-Row
former club	Bath



Adey Powles



Debut:
1994 v Wasps.
Honours:
Gloucestershire
and U-21s.

date of birth	14/3/67
height	5ft 11in
weight	18st 11lb
position	Prop
former club	Berry Hill

Stephane Sanchez



**Representative
Honours:**
French Students
and French
Military.

date of birth	2/1/73
height	5ft 9in
weight	15st 5lb
position	Prop
former club	Montferrand

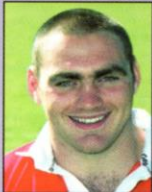
Richard Tombs



**Gloucester
Debut:** 1997 v
Begles-Bordeaux.
**Representative
Honours:**
Australia,
Under-21s and
Super 12.

date of birth	4/1/68
height	5ft 11in
weight	14st 2lb
position	Centre
former club	Queensland

Trevor Woodman



**Gloucester
Debut:** 1996 v
Harlequins.
**Representative
Honours:**
England,
England A,
Under-21s and
Colts.

date of birth	4/8/76
height	5ft 11in
weight	17st 13lb
position	Loose-head Prop
former club	Bath

Ian Sanders



**Gloucester
Debut:** 1997 v
Begles-Bordeaux.
**Representative
Honours:**
England A,
Under-21s, Colts
and U-16s.

date of birth	22/1/71
height	5ft 9in
weight	13st 5lb
position	Scrum-Half
former club	Bath

Phil Vickery



**Gloucester
Debut:** 1996 v
London Irish.
**Representative
Honours:**
England,
England A,
Under-21s, Colts
and U-16s.

date of birth	14/3/76
height	6ft 3in
weight	19st
position	Tight-head Prop
former club	Redruth

Chris Yates



**Gloucester
Debut:** 1999 v
Begles-Bordeaux.
**Representative
Honours:**
England Sevens
and The North.

date of birth	13/5/71
height	6ft 1in
weight	15st 10lb
position	Centre
former club	Sale

Richard Stott



**Gloucester
Debut:**
1999 v Leeds.
**Representative
Honours:**
South West
Colts, Under-18s
and U-16s.

date of birth	1/9/78
height	6ft 6in
weight	17st 4lb
position	Back-Row
former club	Old Richians

Richard Ward



**Gloucester
Debut:** 1996 v
Harlequins.

date of birth	26/11/70
height	6ft 6in
weight	18st 8lb
position	Lock
former club	Havant

Quite A Transformation

by Ian Randall

.....and so, here endeth the year. This is Kingsholm's final Premiership match before Auld Lang Syne rings out again, and what a year it's been. Gloucester began 1999 in ninth place in the League, and finish it right at the top. It's been quite a transformation.

The most significant date? Probably February the 16th, the day the club announced they were to part company with Richard Hill. At the time, supporters seemed genuinely divided on the merit of the decision, but now the bold move of asking Philippe Saint André to take over as Coach looks an inspired one - though I'm sure Philippe would say his star only shines as brightly as the teams' last performance.

One could not argue with Richard Hill's energy for the job. His analysis was as rigorous as his training sessions, and several players - Catling, Tombs, Vickery, and Philippe himself - became established favourites during his reign. Yet, on his own admission at this time last year, Gloucester had reached a plateau.

The board decided Hill was not the man to move the club off it. With his departure went many of the old

guard, including stalwarts like Sims, Windo and Devereux. The inconsistent Benton and the maverick Mapletoft also left as the club moved further and further away from it's local roots, but memories are short, especially when the side is winning.

So who takes the credit for the club's current lofty position, its' highest for 10 years ? Clearly Philippe, ably assisted by John Brain and Audley Lumsden have set out the strategy, but the players, captained by Kingsley Jones (a natural leader in my humble opinion) have carried it out.

In a recent poll to find the Team of the Century, not one Englishman made the final 15. Pundit Eddie Butler suggested England produced solid players, not star players, and players who functioned well as a collective rather than as individuals. Now where have I heard that before...?

Today's visitors have of course had an eventful year themselves. The current Irish exiles are a far cry from the side that battled with Gloucester to avoid relegation in Richard Hill's first full season in charge, and the merger between themselves, London Scottish and Richmond cut the Premiership from 14 clubs to 12 at a stroke.

They've even moved house too - from Sunbury to the Stoop -

though results indicate that there's still a bit of settling in to do.

Thankfully, the temptation to give this chameleon a new name was turned away with tradition prevailing, even if there are now players from South Africa, New Zealand, Australia and good old Glaws on the staff. The one to slip through the net? Prop Kris Fulman.

The next week could be pivotal to the season. After Wednesday's trip to Bedford, there are only three Premiership matches before the beginning of March, and that's a long time for 11 of the sides to look at someone else at the top of the table. A long time for Gloucester to get used to being there.

The Cherry and Whites started the year with a home win against Bath in their eighth League victory from 15 League matches.

If the side can keep control of the likes of Bachop and Cunningham today, and do what every other team has done this season and beat Bedford in midweek, they'll have nine already this season ... and from four matches fewer.

As they would have said in 'Groundhog Day' ... it's been quite a transformation.

C'mon Glaws !

For more information, please phone Steve on 07970 505666, or fax on 01989770446



Today's Mascots:

The Brothers Puddick from Elmbridge are our mascots this afternoon. Mum and Dad, Kirsten and Maurice, decided on a Christmas present with a difference. The three brothers got a copy of this programme in their Christmas stockings yesterday morning. How long did it take them to figure it out, one wonders? Youngest is Philippe (9) who like brother Richard (10) attends Elmbridge Junior School. Both list rugby as their interests, though Richard says he likes holidays as well! Jonathan is 12 years old and in at Sir Thomas Rich's School. He also likes rugby, but in addition lists music and, would you believe, school. All three are devoted Gloucester supporters, as are mum and dad.



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Sunday December 26, 1999

Today's Line-Ups

Gloucester

- 15 Byron Hayward
- 14 Chris Catling
- 13 Terry Fanolua
- 12 Chris Yates
- 11 Tom Beim
- 10 Simon Mannix
- 9 Elton Moncrieff
- 1 Trevor Woodman
- 2 Chris Fortey
- 3 Phil Vickery
- 4 Rob Fidler
- 5 Ian Jones
- 6 Steve Ojomoh
- 7 Kingsley Jones (C)
- 8 Ed Pearce

London Irish

- 15
- 14
- 13
- 12
- 11
- 10
- 9
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8

Replacements

- 16 TBA
- 17 TBA
- 18 TBA
- 19 TBA
- 20 TBA
- 21 TBA
- 22 TBA

Please note that this programme was printed ten days ago and the teams are subject to considerable alteration following last weekend's European Shield matches.

Today's Officials

Referee: Steve Lander Touch Judges: Trevor Fisher, Andy Melrose