

Gloucester RFC Official Matchday Programme

Issue 06 | Price £2.50



Gloucester

RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

v London Irish

POWERGEN CUP ROUND 6

SATURDAY 15TH NOVEMBER 2003

KICK-OFF 1.55 PM



**COMPLETE POWERGEN CUP
REVIEW AND PREVIEW
WORLD CUP DREAM TEAM
ALL THE LATEST NEWS AND
VIEWS FROM KINGSHOLM
UPDATE FROM THE KSM**

Front cover image by GPAImages.com

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NIGEL'S NOTES...

Nigel Melville

Director of Rugby

"...in one respect we do have something in common, both finals were played against Northampton."

The date April 5th 2003 will be fondly remembered by everyone connected with Gloucester Rugby Club. This was a special day with so many happy memories, the day that Gloucester won the Powergen Cup at Twickenham.

As we prepared to open our defence of the Cup this week, I have not met anyone who does not want to repeat such an experience, our guests this afternoon London Irish will have very similar dreams.

London Irish won the Powergen Cup the previous season, in one respect we do have something in common, both finals were played against Northampton.

Talking of Northampton, on Tuesday evening I attended the disciplinary hearing for the unfortunate incident that happened during our game against Northampton the previous week.

We felt that the process was fair and that the 21-day ban given to Andy Hazell reflected the seriousness of the offence. I was disappointed to hear that Northampton chose to go to appeal with the bans on Shane Drahm and Mark Robinson, if players take the laws into their own hands they deserve to be punished. The serious eye injury sustained by London Irish's Chris Sheasby last week is an excellent example of how breaking the rules can potentially end the playing career of a fellow professional – it cannot be condoned.

Today we face a team unaffected by World Cup call-ups, they are playing well and have some real quality players. When the two teams met earlier this season, Gloucester conceded a try in the opening minutes and failed to close the gap. The London Irish pack was dominant throughout the afternoon, today we know we

face another stiff examination.

Last weekend we lost our unbeaten home record of 34 games to our West Country rivals Bath. As if that wasn't bad enough we did not perform well as individuals or as a team.

We are not the kind of team to seek out excuses, so Monday morning's analysis session was not easy for anyone. The response from the player's has been fantastic, the only answer is hard work, we know the expectations of our supporters, and we know that their support is conditional on us giving 100% and more, they deserve no less.

I hope today is yet another special Powergen Cup day for us all, have a great afternoon!





CAPTAIN'S CORNER

Jake Boer

Club Captain

"...we've got to raise our game today as the Irish are playing particularly well at the moment."

It's Powergen Cup time again and I'm sure everyone's thoughts go back to the great cup run of last season.

It's always interesting when you take a break from the Zurich Premiership and either start on the Powergen or the Heineken Cup games.

As a team we treat the cup separately as each game is a one off. There are a series of matches and if you can put the performances together, before you know it, you can be on your way to Twickenham.

The Powergen Cup is a massive occasion and it can't get much bigger than our opening game against London Irish.

Considering how poor we were last week we've got to raise our game today as the Irish are playing particularly well at the moment.

As I've said, you sometimes look for a break from the Premiership, and cups provide just that. Lots of people ask you if it's different playing in the Cup. It's all about mindset and with the Powergen Cup you know that if you have one bad performance you're out.

Sometimes all of the players' mindsets aren't the same all of the time. That is when you have a bad day and last week was a bad result.

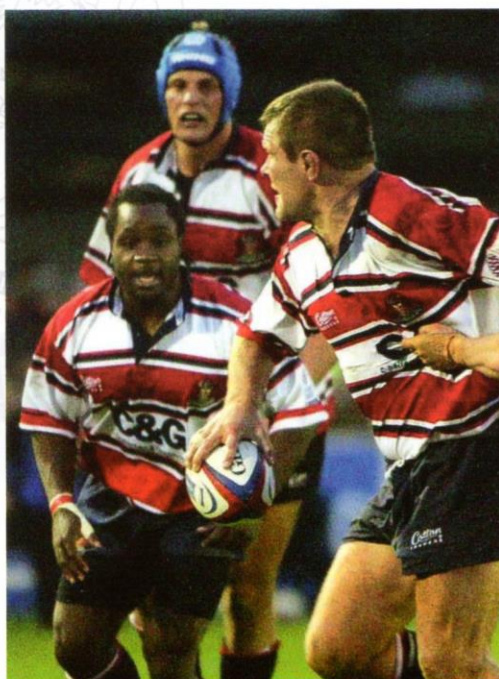
Although it is a slight cliché, but each week in the cup is like a final and the great memories of last year show what a good cup run can do for everyone associated with the Club.

The crowd is always key as well and make a big difference. Supporters hate it when we under perform, but I think that they sometimes

underestimate how much the players hurt when we lose. It does hurt and the feelings from last Saturday lasted a long time.

Fans know that a good win on Saturday can put the team on the way to another trip to Twickenham for a cup final. The supporters have been fantastic since I've been here and their numbers are getting bigger all of the time. They really help us and maybe the crowd doesn't realise how important it is, and how intimidating they can be to the opposition.

Welcome and thanks for your support.



FIRST AND LAST WINNERS – WHAT NOW?

Kingsholm facts man David King takes a look at past Cup encounters and brings back those memories from a few years back, as well as last season's great cup run.

This afternoon we entertain London Irish in the Powergen Cup. Since the conception of the Rugby Football Union national Knockout Competition with it's

“This sequence of victories is encapsulated in a 52 match unbeaten run here at Kingsholm.”

accompanying guises as Tetley Bitter Cup, Pilkington Cup, John Player Cup and the now the Powergen Cup, there have been significant changes in its concept.



From an historical point of view the Cherry and Whites Members Club is always proud to recognise that one of its Committee members, Mike Nicholls led the Club to become the inaugural competition winners. That feat occurred in the 1971-72 season when we defeated Moseley 17-6 in a Twickenham final.

Somewhat amazingly there was not a single minute of action in the entire qualifying rounds played here at Kingsholm. Each round we were drawn away winning at Bath 12-3 (yes, we do win at the Recreation Ground in cup encounters), Bristol 15-4, sharing the points in a 6-6 draw at Coventry (away team qualifying in a tie), then a magnificent victory 9-4 at London Welsh.

We did not suffer one defeat at home that season from 23 fixtures, only Bristol escaping in a 12-12 draw. This sequence of victories is encapsulated in a 52 match unbeaten run here at Kingsholm. That club record began in the autumn of 1970 following a 11-21 reverse against Bedford. It was two years later when Bristol ended that magnificent run with a 13-9 win.

A further six years passed before we appeared at Twickenham again when John Watkins received the trophy after a 6-3 victory over Leicester. Four years on Steve Mills and his team almost emulated the feat of the team Mike Nicholls had led 10 years previous. Not quite, for they had to share the trophy in what was a re-run of the previous final when once again our opponents were Moseley! It was a season when the Club went undefeated here at Kingsholm. Although in fact they actually improved on their predecessors fine record when they won all 28 matches played at Kingsholm.



Decades came and passed before we could once again rejoice and bask in the

could possibly re-appear here at Kingsholm but the competition is now re-

“...last season when Andy Deacon held aloft the Powergen Cup in a rousing 44-20 victory over Northampton Saints.”

reflection of victory at Twickenham again. For it was last season when Andy Deacon held aloft the Powergen Cup in a rousing 44-20 victory over Northampton Saints.

From those heady days of last April we can reflect that some aspects of this club's history in the National Cup are unlikely to be repeated. It is unlikely a whole list of clubs will ever tread the turf here at Kingsholm again. Their hope of enhancing a burgeoning reputation has faded with time. If you are among our members who have been Kingsholm regulars since 1971, you will have witnessed some unlikely names appearing in this popular cup competition – Devizes, St Lukes College, Plymouth Albion, our near neighbours Lydney, Richmond, Rosslyn Park, High Wycombe, Exeter University, Old Regalians, Broughton Park, Walsall and Henley Hawks. Of course some of these clubs

organised with the Zurich Premiership Clubs entering at a later stage.

When the National Cup was introduced the game was purely amateur. The advent of professional players reduced the standing of the majority of clubs and of course it is extremely difficult for them to match the full time players. This is never more emphasised than in National League One. Each season there are two or three clubs who employ full time staff. The League is decided between these two or three, the rest are virtually fodder for them. So it is virtually a mini league within a division, reminiscent of Premier League Soccer.

On a personal note a visit to Worcester to watch the Midlands club entertain the amateurs of Harrogate earlier this season in this competition emphasised the gulf. A 59-0 victory for Worcester was fulfilling for their supporters in a 900 attendance. For the less partisan it was no spectacle and the home club were 2000 souls down on their usual league attendance. There was no usual production of their club programme. So, they obviously anticipated the lethargy towards the fixture.

Our away fixtures in the National Cup have seen visits to Southend, Brixham, Rugby and Wakefield, such visits seen unlikely to re-occur in the immediate future. So, has the cup lost some of it's magic? Maybe, but a cup draw is always an anticipated and



apprehensive event. Long may it continue.

We have met London Irish twice in the last four seasons in this competition. We succumbed to a 34-18 defeat in a Quarter-Final encounter in the 1999-2000 season.

Then again at the same stage of the competition in the 2001-002 campaign when we lost 25-10, both defeats were in away matches.

The only other occasion when we have met the London club was in 1980-81 when we knocked them out of the cup in a Quarter-Final away encounter winning 22-13. So, today we have the opportunity to entertain London Irish for the first time in the National Cup here at Kingsholm. The last two winners of the Powergen Cup will be on parade. Ironically, both club's opponents on their day of glory at Twickenham were Northampton Saints! What now?





KINGSHOLM SATURDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2003



GLOUCESTER 14

TRIES: GARVEY

PENALTIES: PAUL (3)



BATH RUGBY 20

TRIES: BARKLEY, KYDD CONVERSIONS: BARKLEY (2)

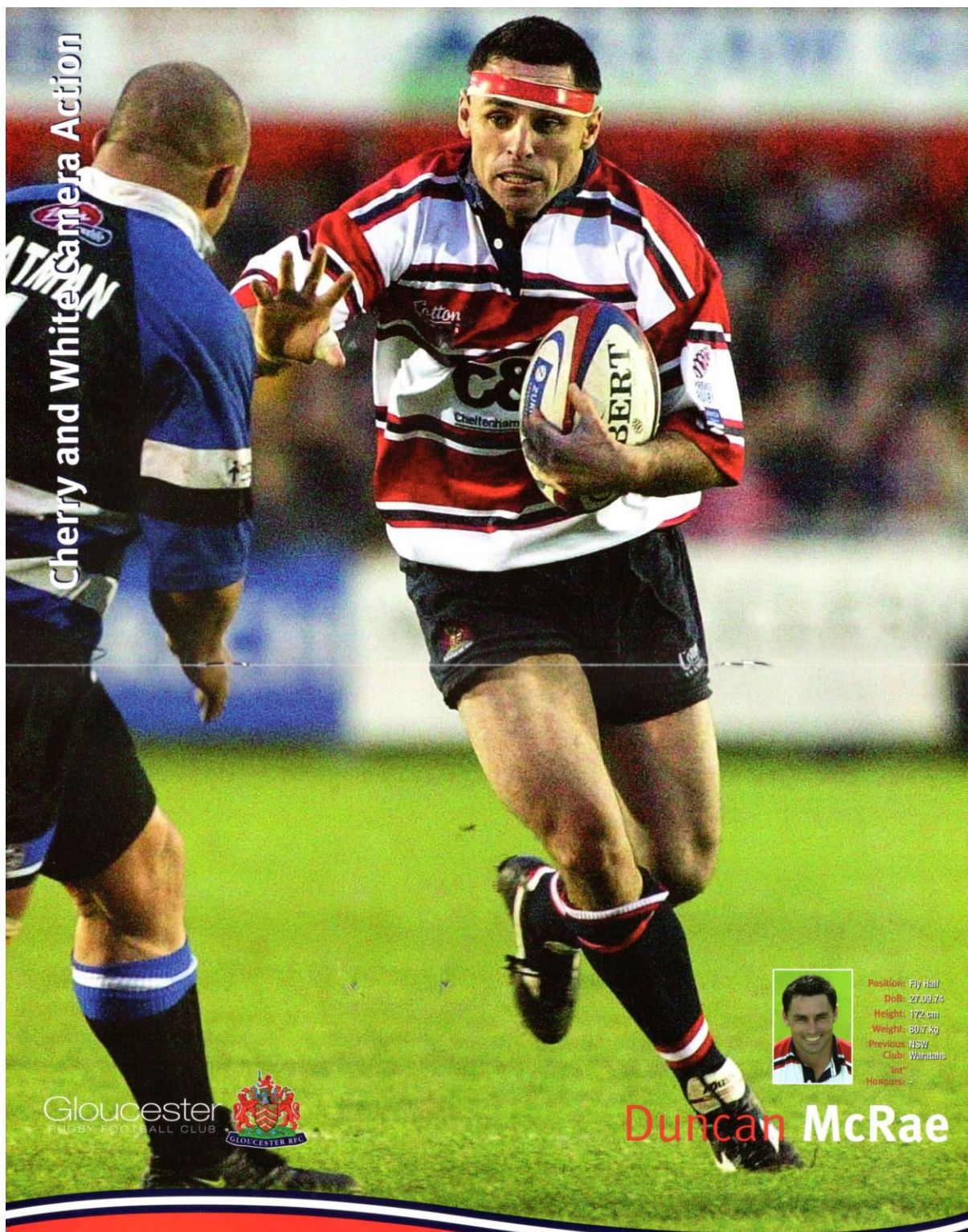
PENALTIES: BARKLEY (2)



top left: James Forrester wins a line out. top right: Rodrigo Roncero back in the front row. middle: Alex Brown and Bath's Rob Fidler in a line out.
bottom left: Marcel Garvey is stopped by Bath's Lee Mears (left) and Michael Lipman. bottom right: Peter Buxton is tackled by Bath's Paul Sampson.

Pictures courtesy of Bruce Seabrook - GPA Images

Cherry and White Camera Action



Position: Fly Half
DoB: 27.09.74
Height: 172 cm
Weight: 80.7 kg
Previous: NSW
Club: Waratahs
Int'l
Honours: -



Duncan McRae

club sponsor

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Peter Arnold

Cherry and Whites programme columnist Peter Arnold talks about last weekend, this weekend, Nigel Melville's TV stardom and a blast from the past.

SO WHAT?

We lost our ground record after a mammoth 35 games last weekend. So what? It had to happen some time. The next home run starts here.

We've seen it all before, more than once, and I long ago came to the opinion that such records are by no means an unmixed blessing. In fact, they can become something of a millstone round the neck: just something else to look over your shoulder at when you should be concentrating on the business at hand.

It's fatally easy to concentrate on not losing a match when you should be concentrating on winning. In these days

of four-try bonus points, that can make a difference come the shake-up at the end of the season. I've certainly seen sides go into defensive mode far too early in a game for this sort of reason.

Losing to Bath at Kingsholm is difficult to swallow, but they deserved to win on the day, and they didn't achieve their present elevated status by accident.

Losing to Bath, slipping down the table - there may be many reasons why last Saturday's result was disappointing, but losing a ground record isn't one of them.

A STAR IS BORN ?

You wouldn't immediately think of Nigel

Melville as TV celebrity material. He's noted more for sound sense than sound bites. Which just shows how wrong you can be. For me, his informed comment as a member of ITV's analysis panel throughout the World Cup has been one of the highlights of the event's coverage, which has quite impressed me. After all, the ITV network isn't actually famous for screening rugby.

Of course, Our Nige does have a certain advantage. As far as I am aware, he is the only commentator on the channel who is currently in charge of a top-flight Premiership squad. One wouldn't knock the former playing qualities of the likes of Francois Peinaar or Will Carling, or deny the shrewd rugby brains which they can apply to the coverage, but Nigel's up-to-the-minute knowledge of day-to-day squad thinking, and appreciation of how today's players minds work, gives him a decided edge over the others.

Example. After Matt Dawson and Richard Hill were injured during England's very first match, the panel received an e-mail from a gentleman who enquired whether it was really worth risking star players against such minor opposition as Georgia provided. The panel would have none of it, and went on at some length about how the players needed a game, how they were stir-crazy after months of training, how it was important for the team to get together, and so on. When Nigel's turn to speak came round, he simply stated "You've got more chance of getting



injured in training than during a match these days!" and left it at that.

The crunch came when he was asked to comment on Andy Gomarsall's performance against Uruguay. "Doesn't really matter what he does" came the reply. "Clive's mind is made up". Will Carling immediately leapt in with the opinion that Dawson and Bracken would be the choices for the Welsh game. They weren't far wrong, were they?

Nigel Melville didn't need to say more. His tone of delivery, and the look on his face eloquently showed what he thought of a selection policy that allowed two players with suspect fitness to be chosen while a proven performer with no injuries at all couldn't even claim a place on the bench.

One further Melville gem, which I liked, came when someone commented that Nigel actually captained England in his first International. Quick as a flash came the riposte.

"Well, that wasn't my fault!"

WHAT'S A NICE JOINT LIKE THAT DOING IN A CHAP LIKE HIM ?

I see that the New Zealand squad doctor at the World Cup has been doing his homework, and claims that he has evidence to prove that Polynesian players recover from knee injuries much more quickly than do victims from other ethnic origins.

I'm sure Junior Paramore and Terry Fanolua would be interested to know if it also works for damage to other parts of the anatomy.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

Mark Cummings, from BBC Radio Gloucestershire, gave me a welcome blast from the past last week. It came as part of an ongoing fun quiz that his excellent mid-



morning show was running during the run-up to the England Vs Wales game, where he was matching one supporter from each side in a head-to-head involving a very mixed series of questions. I was delighted to find that Mark had pitched me up against our old friend Kingsley Jones, former Gloucester captain and now player-coach at Doncaster who had beaten Lydney only the week before.

We had a little friendly banter, during which I remarked that I didn't want to intrude on private grief, but that I would fancy Wales' chances rather more if Kingsley was skipping the Welsh side, because I didn't think anyone in their camp had the captaincy skills which he had exhibited during his stay at Gloucester.

During the conversation it transpired that

Kingsley had played against London Irish twice while at Kingsholm, and scored a try in both games. He then went on to wish the lads the best of luck today, and sent his regards to everyone who remembers him. I'm sure we reciprocate, nice bloke that he is. It was great to chat with him, even if only via the telephone.

Incidentally, I won.

WASPISH JEREMY ?

I was struck by a quote from 'Newsnight's' Jeremy Paxman the other day. "The early bird may catch the worm" he said, "But the second mouse gets the cheese."

Must be a Wasps supporter.

BY IAN RANDALL BBC RADIO GLOUCESTERSHIRE



BBC Radio Gloucestershire's Ian Randall looks at last season's Powergen Cup memories.

Personally, I blame the Gloucester Citizen's Alastair Downey. He jets off to report on the closing stages of the World Cup and Gloucester's home record goes up in smoke – and against Bath of all people. Nigel Melville was honest in his post match assessment that Gloucester's detail in their performance was poor, and

Catt helped England into the last four and tomorrow's clash with the French, who seem to have reached the semi finals with very little fuss. Deadlines mean I don't know the England team, but it may well be that Jason Leonard again gets the nod over "Dougie" although Woodman is likely to play a significant part from the bench. Dean Ryan has publicly said that he sees England as potential final material. Bearing in mind what we've seen so far, I hope he's right.

"The Premiership table may show Gloucester as seventh, but in reality it is still very close, and there is still a long way to go."

In the overall shape of the season, the Powergen Cup is but a small part, but as everyone at Kingsholm will tell you, it can be a significant one. The bare fact is that a Premiership side has to win only four games to lift the Trophy, but the likelihood is that they will all be against clubs from the top division, due to the structure of the competition.

that Bath gobbled up every error that handed them an opportunity. The Premiership table may show Gloucester as seventh, but in reality it is still very close, and there is still a long way to go.

Only four teams from the National Leagues are left in the sixth round draw, but with two of them drawn together (Pertemps Bees – formerly Birmingham/Solihull – and Wakefield), there is bound to be one minnow in the last eight this time.

Alastair would have seen England's win over Wales first hand, but I must confess that at half time the weekend was taking on dismal proportions. Thankfully you don't get prizes for how you win, only for doing so, and the introduction of Trevor Woodman and particularly Mike

One of Nigel Melville's favourite phrases is that you must 'front up' to whatever you face, and that was certainly the case in the Cup last season. Gloucester



The boys celebrate with the Powergen Cup last season

comfortably saw off Exeter, but the quarter final against Saracens followed the defeat in Munster. That game showed the difference between good quality domestic and top quality European opposition, and from that point onward, Gloucester's graph was upward right through to the final against Northampton.

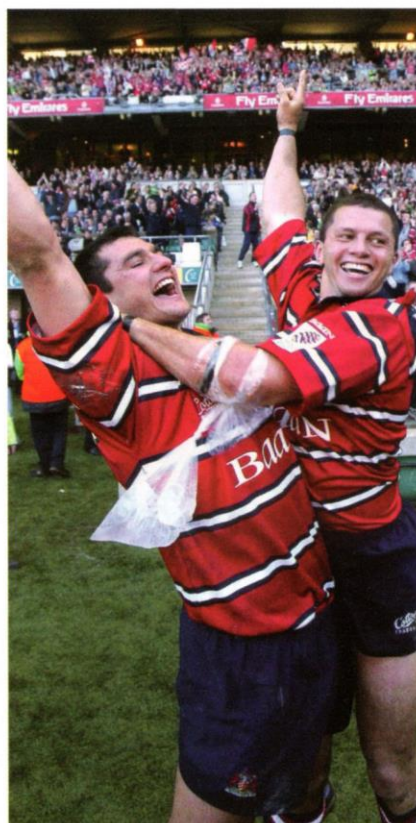
As regular readers will know, to me a matchday programme is an essential part of going to a game, whether I'm working or not, and particularly on a big occasion. Nigel's page in the Twickenham programme referred to the final as 'a celebration of the best in English club rugby'. He wasn't wrong. The first half came and went in a flash, and it seemed inconceivable that the pace of the action and the scoring could continue for another 40 minutes.

As it was, Gloucester established the better platform, gradually exerted a level of control and Mercier's goals gave them a cushion. The most memorable sensation was when Simpson-Daniel sped away for the clinching score, whereupon I, and probably every Gloucester supporter in the ground, felt the stands physically shake. I can't recall ever experiencing that before. The pain of the Munster defeat and the rumours over the club's financial affairs were swept aside as the team lifted the Powergen Cup.

Now, having been to the top table and sampled the fare on offer, you want more of it, but today is not an easy start to the defence of the cup. Irish fly half Barry Everitt seems to have got back into the kicking groove on the evidence of last Sunday's win at Saracens, and Gloucester have already lost at the Madsjeski Stadium this season, albeit in a poor match.

In a way the situation is not dissimilar to the one Gloucester faced last January against Saracens – a loss that many supporters felt was unthinkable having occurred the week before. Time for the team to cut the penalty count, do the simple things well, and you to remember that days like April 5 2003 don't come about without some significant vocal encouragement.

C'mon Glaws!



'Join us for commentary of every game'

BBC Radio Gloucestershire (104.7 FM & 1413 AM)

on the official club website, www.gloucesterrugbyclub.com.

and on the BBC website, www.bbc.co.uk/gloucestershire



Fans Zone

with
Bob Fenton

Well the winning home record had to end sometime, didn't it. For fully 26 months Gloucester went unbeaten at Kingsholm and, as if being top of the league wasn't good enough for them, then Bath had to come along and rain on our parade.

It was never going to last forever, someone was always going to put one over on us on our own turf, but did it have to be them... Of course there was the usual wailing and gnashing of teeth

"Last season's Powergen Cup victory was, for many people, the high spot in many years of travelling the country (and further) supporting the mighty Cherry and Whites. "

from some quarters after the game, but those of us with longer memories (i.e. longer than the 26-month unbeaten record) will recall, it's not that long ago when we would have regarded a defeat by Bath by a margin of only six points to be something of a moral victory.

Still, lets look on the bright side, we can start another unbeaten run here today.

Last season's Powergen Cup victory was, for many people, the high spot in many years of travelling the country (and further) supporting the mighty Cherry and Whites.

It easily eclipsed the previous season's trip to Twickenham to win the Zurich play-off trophy - those were the days before it was a winner takes all affair - and it went some way towards erasing the memories of THAT final...

The vision of Sinbad plucking that mad

pass out of defence and crashing over to score is still as fresh today as it was moments after it happened, the looks on Dawson and Thompson's faces when you watched it again on TV just added to the pleasure.

But now we start our defence, and it's not going to be easy. London Irish have already beaten us once this season up at the Mad Jet Ski, and they are currently enjoying a good spell of form.

Unlike ourselves they are not affected by World Cup call-ups and will field a full strength side. With Gloucester old boy Mark Mapletoft pulling the strings at number 10, on their day they are more than capable of getting a win against anyone.

I have to confess a soft spot for London Irish not just because I used to live not much further than a decent drop-kick from their old Sunbury ground, and enjoyed more than the occasional pint of the black stuff down there.

What makes them a bit special for me is their fans, they are a bit like us really - they know their rugby, hugely passionate about their team and follow them through thick and thin. No fair-weather supporters, these. Lesser fans (no names, but yes, I am talking about you, Saracens) would have packed up and gone home but not this lot.

Look at what they have had to put up with: forced out of their ground at Sunbury for commercial reasons they moved the few miles up the road to The Stoop. Then Harlequins kicked them out for who knows what reason, though one suspects that it was because they [Quins] were embarrassed at the success and fan



Last time out against London Irish

base of their tenants. Then they were off on their travels again, this time heading down the M4 to Reading.

In all that time the fans have stayed loyal, and made the trips with them. They'll be here today – big green wigs making them look like they have just returned from a day trip to a dodgy nuclear power station, those Irish drum things that I can't remember the name of, and bucket loads of good humour.

To their further credit they have made themselves at home wherever they have played, and at Reading have done a great job of attracting new fans to the ground. Even though it is a football ground the Reading trip is one of my favourite away games of the season. The atmosphere is always great and when their fans sing 'Athenry' before the game you just sit back and enjoy it.

That said, I hope they have left the guys with big drums at home today. I left Reading with a crashing headache after sitting too close to them, and as I said at the time, they don't need these people to generate a good atmosphere.

Now if only the supremely intelligent

people that organise the fixture list every season could only arrange for us to play each other on St Paddy's Day we could have the party of all time. Breweries across the land would be on overtime for weeks leading up to that one.

Well that's enough brown-nosing to the opposition. I hope we stuff you today, it's our cup and we want to keep it!

Here's a question that's been bothering just about every Gloucester supporter – and most rugby pundits – for the past few weeks: What has Andy Gomarsall got to do to get a place in the England squad? Motormouth Dawson is clearly still off his game, and Kyran Broken was so slow and plodding against South Africa that Johnny Wilkinson could have pulled up a deck chair, sat down and read the papers while he waited for the ball.

And if, like me, you were left wondering where your fingernails had gone by the end of the Welsh game, then you are still waiting to see England's much-vaunted backs get their hands on some decent ball.

The only games where England backs have shown any zip was against Georgia and Uruguay when Gommers strutted his

funky stuff. Okay, you can argue that we were playing opposition that was not of the highest calibre, but the job had to be done.

Dawson was not playing well towards the end of last season, and Bracken has been off his game for the last two years at least, but they are consistently selected in front of the only English scrum half who was playing to the top of his form through the previous year.

So you are left with the question, what, exactly, has Andy done wrong? Did he superglue Clive's baseball cap to his head or play some other dastardly trick on him? Or maybe we should wonder what Bracken and Dawson have done to deserve Clive's unswerving loyalty.

On the plus side for Gloucester is the fact that when Andy returns he will be burning up to get on the field, all he has done – with the exception of about three hours – is train, train and train again. When he does finally run out in a Gloucester shirt I wouldn't like to be on the opposing side, though that said let's hope that they won't be starting their journey home before next weekends final!

TRY
CONVERSION
PENALTY
DROP GOAL

GLOUCESTER

Jon Goodridge	15	fullback
Marcel Garvey	14	wing
Robert Todd	13	centre
Henry Paul	12	centre
James Simpson-Daniel	11	wing
Duncan McRae	10	flyhalf
Simon Amor	09	scrumhalf
Rodrigo Roncero	01	prop
Chris Fortey	02	hooker
Andy Deacon	03	prop
Alex Brown	04	lock
Mark Cornwell	05	lock
Jake Boer (c)	06	flanker
James Merriman	07	flanker
Peter Buxton	08	no. 8
Chris Collins	16	replacements
Nick Wood	17	
Adrian Olver	18	
Adam Eustace	19	
Luke Narroway	20	
Alex Page	21	
Josh Frape	22	



LONDON IRISH

Michael Horak	15	
Paul Sackey	14	
Geoff Appleford	13	
Rob Hoadley	12	
Justin Bishop	11	
Barry Everitt	10	
Darren Edwards	09	
Neal Hatley	01	
Naka Drotske	02	
Rob Hardwick	03	
Ryan Strudwick (C)	04	
Bob Casey	05	
Declan Danaher	06	
Kieron Dawson	07	
Phil Murphy	08	
Pierre Durant	16	
Adrian Flavin	17	
Nick Kennedy	18	
Paul Gustard	19	
Nils Mordt	20	
Kevin Berrett	21	
Ross Laidlaw	22	

TRY
CONVERSION
PENALTY
DROP GOAL

POWERGEN CUP ROUND 6



Friday 14 November
Leeds Tykes vs NEC Harlequins

Saturday 15 November
Bath Rugby vs Northampton Saints
Pertemps Bees vs Wakefield
Leicester Tigers vs Sale Sharks

Sunday 16 November
Bristol Shoguns vs London Wasps
Penzance and Newlyn vs Saracens
Rotherham Titans vs Newcastle Falcons

TODAY'S MATCH OFFICIALS

Referee: Geraint Ashton Jones RFU

1st TJ: Ashley Reay RFU

2nd TJ: Lloyd Jackson RFU

Replacement Referee: Dave Rose RFU

4th Official: Mark Tovey RFU

Today's Result

Gloucester

London Irish

3261

design: paul watkins
dunwoody
sports marketing

01635 35599 | www.d-sport.co.uk