

European Challenge Cup

Final 06



Gloucester Rugby
London Irish

Sunday 21st May KO 12.15pm

Twickenham Stoop Stadium

Official Programme £4



European Challenge Cup

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Final



Luke Narraway of Gloucester charges upfield during the European Challenge Cup Quarter-Final against Brive at Kingsholm

European Challenge Cup 2005/2006 Review



The only certainty about anything this afternoon is that there is going to be a new name etched onto the European Challenge Cup – Gloucester Rugby and London Irish are in uncharted waters and

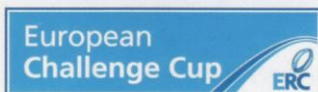
through to their first European finals.

And the long-haul statistics suggest the two best teams possible are at the Twickenham Stoop to do battle for the coveted title, London Irish finishing third in the Premiership and Gloucester fifth, surrounded by Heineken Cup teams in the top

half of the table.

But when the 20 clubs from six nations set out in October in search of Euro glory the field was wide open and the chasers including two former Heineken Cup winners – Brive and Northampton Saints.

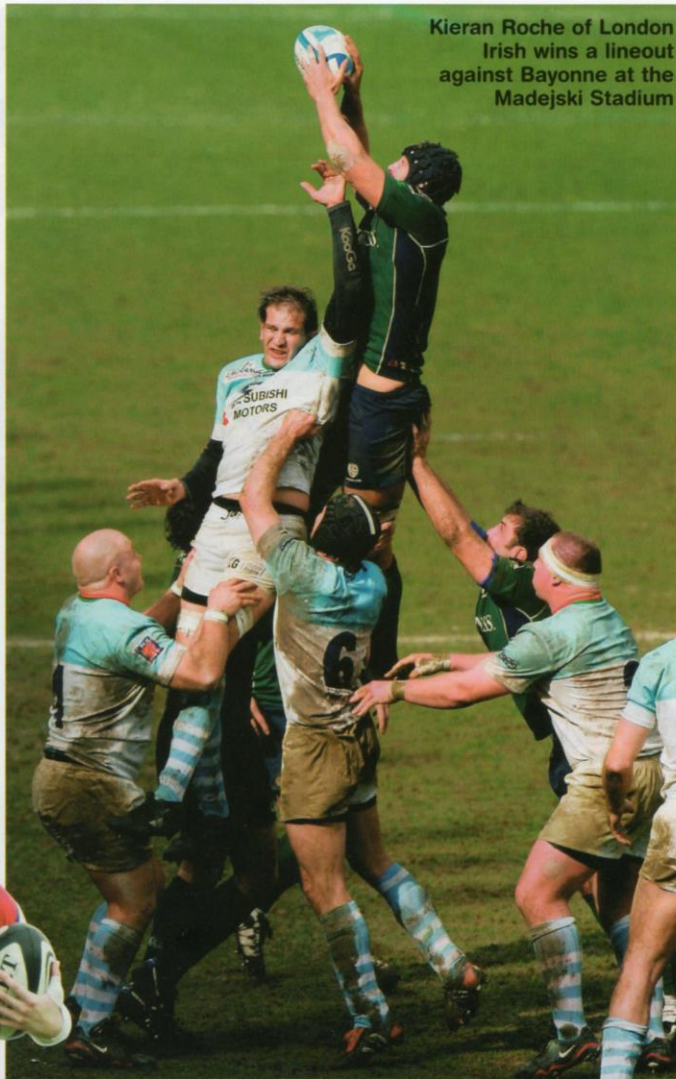
Seven months later, however, and it is a strictly English affair



Anthony Elliott tries to stop Topsy Oja from scoring during a match at Kingsholm Park



Gloucester's Alex Brown wins a line out from Worcester's Phil Murphy during their 32-23 victory in the Semi-Final at Kingsholm



Kieran Roche of London Irish wins a lineout against Bayonne at the Madejski Stadium

the challenges from France, Ireland, Italy, Scotland and Romania have all fallen away to leave an English team – be it Gloucester or the Exiles – the tournament winner for a sixth successive season.

And the finalists have got to this showpiece occasion in real style, winning all eight of their matches along the way – something only London Wasps, Sale Sharks (2002), Colomiers and Bourgoin,



of previous tournament winners, have managed.

Gloucester had a tough start against Bayonne before winning 26-10 but the away success was a potent sign of the times to come.

They then went on a try rampage – scoring 16 against Bucuresti, 10 against Toulon

in each of their back-to-back matches and they rounded off matters with a seven-try 27-13 triumph over Bayonne at Kingsholm and the reward of a home quarter-final tie.

That earned them a last eight showdown against Brive, but, once again, seven tries were too much for the French Top 14 team as they went down 46-13.

That performance earned them



Final

European Challenge Cup



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Newcastle Falcons' Anthony Elliott tries to stop Topsy Ojo from scoring during the Semi-Final match at Kingston Park



making home advantage count 48-5 against Bayonne – including seven tries and a 43-point margin compared to Gloucester's four tries and 13-points margin at Kingsholm in the Pool stages.

Like Gloucester, the Irish also had an all-English Premiership match-up in their semi-final, having to travel to a Newcastle Falcons side just welcoming back Jonny Wilkinson.

In the end it was tight, but tries from Scottish hooker, Robbie Russell, young wing sensation, Topsy Ojo, Gonzola Tiesi, Sailosi Tagicakibau and seven points from Riki Flutey's boot saw them home and through to this afternoon's mouth-watering final.

Newcastle's Jamie Noon challenges London Irish's Sailosi Tagicakibau during the semi-final at Kingston Park



an all-England semi-final shoot-out with Worcester Warriors, which turned in a real classic.

Shane Drahm drove the Warriors into a commanding lead before Gloucester's England Under-19 fly half, Ryan Lamb, came to the fore to conjure up a try with an inch-perfect cross kick and help himself to 13 points from his trusty boot in a 31-23 victory.

London Irish also crossed the Channel to launch their challenge against Pau, the 2000 champions and last season's runners-up.

Tries from Argentine back row star, Juan Leguizamón and Delon Armitage saw them home 20-13.

Armitage was to become one of the stars of the Pool stage with

seven tries, including two more against Pau in the 75-12 home win in Round 6.

Before that the Exiles had no trouble in disposing of Rugby Parma at home with 10 tries and then doing the double over Agen in the space of a week, 29-21 in Reading and 32-24 in France.

Rugby Parma almost caused an upset in Italy before going down 19-11 but there was another French test in the quarter-finals, the Exiles



Final



GLOUCESTER
RUGBY

A Quiet Revolution

By Chris Hewett (The Independent)



Worcester Warriors lock, Craig Gillies beats Alex Brown of Gloucester to line out ball during the European Challenge Cup semi-final at Kingsholm in April

Shortly after Gloucester's defeat at Bath in the final pool stage of this season's Powergen Cup – a result that surprised precisely no one, given the Cherry and White's utter inability to make the remotest sense of life on the banks of the Avon – Dean Ryan was asked whether his side's latest collective descent to the river bed would leave a nasty big hole in their 2006-07 fixture list.

Dean Ryan



European Challenge Cup

Final

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After all, the Powergen offered a relatively soft route towards Heineken Cup qualification: five games in total, as opposed to a 22-match slog through the Guinness Premiership.

“It isn’t about the Heineken Cup,” the coach replied, with considerable feeling. “It’s about winning games and winning tournaments. We wanted to do well in this match because teams who are really serious about themselves measure success by the trophies they put in the cabinet. This competition wasn’t a means to an end, but an end in itself.”

Ryan feels exactly the same way about the European Challenge Cup, a tournament he considers well worthy of his

complete attention. Had he, and his charges, been half-hearted about it, there is little doubt that they would have finished second to their near neighbours from Worcester in the semi-final. Worcester were highly motivated, to the extent that their coach, the former Gloucester lock John Brain, admitted he would “not be a nice person to be around” if the result did not go their way. Word has it that Brain was true to his word – indeed, that he was close to spontaneous combustion when it became clear that his side would not reach a major European final for the first time.

Gloucester know what it is to do the business on finals day – they won the Powergen Cup as recently as 2003, sticking 40

The Gloucester team celebrate victory after the Powergen Cup Final against Northampton Saints in 2003

points on Northampton, at Twickenham, to secure the spoils. But in Europe, they have always come up marginally short. They could, and probably should, have beaten Leicester Tigers in a tourniquet-tight Heineken Cup semi-final at Vicarage Road in 2001. But they didn’t. They should certainly have done for Sale Sharks in at a similar stage in the Challenge Cup a year later, yet somehow contrived to mess things up at the last knockings. Sale went on to beat Pontypridd in the final, which made the mood in the Kingsholm Shed even bleaker.

History suggests it is time that





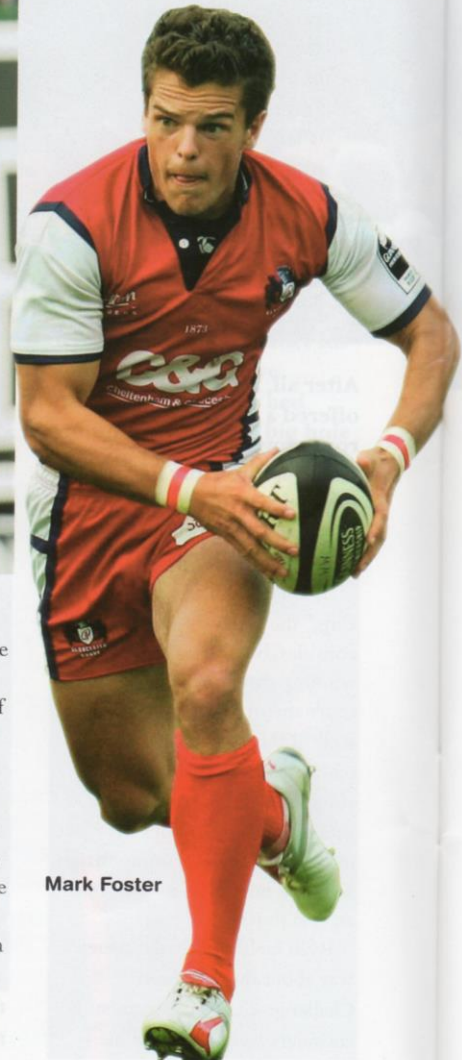
Olly Morgan

Gloucester laid their great hairy forward-driven mitts on a cross-border trophy. This current team has very little history about it, though. In fact, it is brand spanking new: new players, new approach, new ambition. Ryan has not been shouting the odds from the rooftops – quite the opposite, if truth be told. Gloucester have been eerily quiet during a root-and-branch transformation that has seen the coach introduce a batch of

precocious young backs, from the fly-half Ryan Lamb to the full-back Olly Morgan via the likes of Anthony Allen in the centre and Mark Foster on the wing. These babes in arms do not always feature in the same starting line-up, but Ryan has no hesitation in unleashing them *en masse* when he senses the time is right. It is perfectly possible to argue that in terms of developing a new generation of English-qualified talent, Kingsholm is the leading

nursery in the country.

“We feel we can attack from anywhere these days, because the young players have enormous confidence as well as outstanding pace,” said one of the comparative old-stagers in the squad, the international flanker, Andy Hazell. “Until fairly recently, everyone knew how Gloucester would approach a game of rugby.



Mark Foster

European
Challenge Cup



European Challenge Cup

Final



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We would look to dominate up front, drive a few line-outs in the corner and kick our goals. We weren't completely one-dimensional, because people like James Simpson-Daniel always had something different about them. But we were probably more predictable than we are at the moment. Now, we seem to have a whole new set of options available to us. It's a wonderfully exciting time to be at the club."

Hazell would dearly love to win this trophy, not simply as a means of rewarding the most loyal set of supporters in English rugby but as a way of cementing this ultra-modern style of attacking rugby in the Gloucester psychology. "In the end, it's important to win things," he said. "It's why we do what we do."

Assuming the West Countrymen stick to their recently-established principle of playing an all-court game and devil take the hindmost, this final could easily turn out to be one of the most remarkable European showpieces of them all. London Irish know what it is to move the ball, as anyone who witnessed their nine-try victory over Wasps in the penultimate round of Premiership matches will confirm without a second's pause for thought. With Gloucester playing a similarly bold brand of rugby, brimming with youthful swagger, it seems highly unlikely that this last act of the European campaign will be found wanting in attacking commitment. Hang on to your hats...it could be one hell of a ride.

Andy Hazell





Mike Tindall in action against Saracens in January's Guinness Premiership match at Vicarage Road



Leading from the back

By Hugh Godwin, Independent on Sunday



If a team looks for leadership to its captain, Gloucester's players could be forgiven for going a little cross-eyed of late. Adam Balding was named club skipper in pre-season and promptly had seven bells knocked out of him in

the opening match at Worcester. Various, over the past couple of years, the toss of the coin and pre-match rallying cry has fallen to Phil Vickery, Jake Boer and, most recently, Peter Buxton. Perforce, the captaincy has been more of a collective effort.

Step forward the leader of the backs. Mike Tindall is the World Cup winning centre with a boxer's nose and a face for poker. At 27 he is far from a veteran but he has that 'been there, done that' quality and you sense that if he happened to be stationed among the troops on the scrummaging frontline he

would be definite captaincy material, rather than taking on the job during matches when one or other of Balding, Buxton, Boer or Vickery has been *hors de combat*, substituted or, simply, not selected.

It may be odd for a Yorkshireman to be stepping out in deepest Gloucestershire with the Queen's grand-daughter on his arm but the self-effacing Tindall carries off his rugby as he does his courtship of Zara Phillips: with humour and dignity. He does a nice line in unflinching smiles, which is useful in his hobby at the card table, laying down a winning hand at Texas Hold'Em.

Still, the man with the features of a prize-fighter has not laid a hand on a trophy or a medal since the Webb Ellis Cup was drop-kicked England's way by Jonny Wilkinson in November 2003. What's more when Tindall left Bath for Gloucester last summer it was questioned in every quarter in and out of the West Country whether he was damaged goods after a series of injuries. Had he sacrificed his chances of success to secure a pay packet? The best answer to that is today's final and a glance at the final Premiership table, showing Gloucester in fifth to Bath's ninth – a gap of two



Dean Ryan, the Gloucester Head Coach with his assistant Bryan Redpath



Ryan. "If there's some hybrid game out there that's not being achieved [by England], they say it's Mike fault because he's big and runs straight lines. Mike will do all the small things well which allow other people opportunities and teams are made up of players like that."

Not even Tindall's best friends, whether in high places or otherwise, would argue he is the most supple or natural passer of the ball. But as Ryan or Gordon Ramsay might say, he has other people to do that for him.

James Simpson-Daniel was first sprinkled with stardust at Sedbergh School – *alma mater* of iconic centres in

wins and five bonus points.

Tindall is valued by Gloucester's head coach, Dean Ryan, precisely for the undramatic nature of his work. "Mike has been under seriously unwarranted criticism because of international rugby," said



Tindall (centre) during the European Challenge Cup semi-final against Worcester Warriors at Kingsholm on April 22



their different ways, Will Carling and Will Greenwood. The second of four rugby-playing brothers, 'Sinbad' lost a semi-final in his first Gloucester season – to Leicester in the Heineken Cup in 2001 – and another a year later to Sale in the domestic cup. Then there was Gloucester's oh-so-painful Premiership play-off defeat by Wasps in 2003.

Thankfully for him there has been an entry in the credit column; a colourful one, too, when Gloucester pasted Northampton with 40 points to win the 2003 Powergen Cup final in that 'other' stadium a stone's

throw away from today's venue. Simpson-Daniel's try early in this season's European Challenge Cup semi-final against Worcester had

we sages in the press box scratching our heads – his in-and-out demolition of Dale Rasmussen was on the blindside



Denis Betts

from our view in the East Side. The thing with Simpson-Daniel is that even when what he does is in plain view, it can come across as a trick of the eye.

Off the field, Ryan's fellow stewards of the coaching department are a couple of fairly raw recruits. Denis Betts, once of Wigan, is one of those rugby league greats who has found a new challenge in union. Redpath, the former Scotland scrum-half and captain, was interviewed for the role of backs coach by Ryan almost a year ago, when Ryan himself was new to the director of rugby's chair after the departure of Nigel Melville. "We met for a coffee and we didn't talk a huge amount about rugby," Ryan recalled. "We talked about standards and what Bryan wanted to do." The deal was done within 24 hours.

Ryan, once of the Army, acquired a certain reputation during a playing career of four England caps and probably as many brushes with the disciplinary bigwigs. He has not softened when it comes to suffering fools since donning the coach's tracksuit but his regime is steering Gloucester in the right direction. This is a man, please note, whose idea of a summer's wind-down is a 120-mile bicycle ride through an Alpine stage of the Tour de France.

Whereas one or two notable Gloucester players have tumbled off the mountain, Ryan regards Tindall and Simpson-Daniel as possessing the right stuff. They are leaders, in fact, if not in job title.



James Simpson-Daniel





Gloucester Rugby



By Michael Austin



ADAM BALDING (Captain)

Number 8. Born 7.12.79 in Coventry. 1.88m (6'2"), 111kg (17st 7lb)

Adam Balding signed on an initial two-year contract for Gloucester last season from Leicester and has flourished in his new surroundings. He was among the England squad that toured Argentina four years ago, being an unused Test bench replacement, after representing his country at under-16, 18, 21 and A levels. Converted his age-group prowess into a successful career that includes appearances at blind-side flanker. Joined Tigers in 1998 after playing for Coventry Saracens, Broadstreet and Coventry, where he was educated at Caludon Castle School. Had an unlucky start to this season when fracturing a cheekbone against Worcester Warriors and was absent for nine weeks.



JACK ADAMS

Centre. Born 17.9.86 in Gloucester. 1.82m (6'0"), 95kg (14st 13lb)

Jack Adams, a powerful runner and staunch tackler, is a product of St Peter's School in Gloucester and, at 19, is a highly promising player coming off the celebrated local production line. His direct approach and subtle running lines brought two appearances off the bench last September against Sale Sharks and Bristol in the Guinness Premiership but he subsequently suffered damage to the AC ligaments in his knee.



ANTHONY ALLEN

Centre. Born 1.9.86 in Southampton. 1.80m (5'11"), 90kg (14st 3lb)

Anthony Allen, a former NEC Harlequin, joined Gloucester from Millfield School this season and ran in two tries and forced a penalty try when the Cherry & Whites beat London Wasps to win the Compass Group Middlesex Sevens for the first time last August. Also scored a try in his second Guinness Premiership match against Leicester Tigers. A member of England's Senior National Academy, he represented England Under-16s and 19s and was a member of this season's Grand Slam-winning Under-21 side.



SIMON AMOR

Fly half. Born 25.4.79 in Kingston-upon-Thames. 1.70m (5'7"), 75kg (12st 0lb)

Simon Amor, a Cambridge graduate in Management Studies, has excelled for, and captained, the England Sevens team since winning a Blue and joining Gloucester. His triumphs include the Hong Kong title and he led the side to the silver medal in this year's Commonwealth Games in Melbourne, having also appeared in the 2002 event. Has played for London Irish, Blackheath, Coventry, Rugby Lions, Middlesex, London & South-East and England Schools, Colts, Students and Under-21s. He is joining London Wasps next season on a three-year contract.



OLIVIER AZAM

Hooker. Born 21.10.74 in Tarbes, France. 1.85m (6'1"), 115kg (18st 2lb)

Olivier Azam first signed for Gloucester in 2001, having earlier played for both his hometown club Tarbes and for Montferrand, from where he returned to Kingsholm last season. He made his Test debut for France in 1995 when appearing against Romania and Argentina in the Latin Cup in Buenos Aires. Has won ten caps overall and also played for France A, his first game at that level being against Wales in 1996. Recently returned to Gloucester action after being absent since last October through an injury to his left shoulder that needed surgery.



JAMES BAILEY

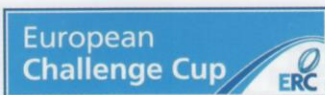
Wing. Born 5.8.83 in London. 1.80m (5'11"), 83kg (13st 2lb)

James Bailey signed for Gloucester from West Country neighbours Bristol after scoring 14 tries in 21 National One games in 2003-04. He went on to impress for England in the IRB Under-21 World Championship in Scotland. He teamed up with several of his Grand Slam-winning teammates at that level at Gloucester in Brad Davies, Marcel Garvey, Nick Wood and Luke Narryway. Made his Premiership debut as a replacement for Garvey in the 31-17 win over Newcastle Falcons at Kingsholm in September 2004 and scored five tries overall in the Middlesex Sevens last August.

THE GLOUCESTER MANAGEMENT TEAM

DEAN RYAN Head Coach
BRYAN REDPATH Assistant Coach
DENIS BETTS Skills & Development Coach
MIKE ANTHONY Fitness & Conditioning Coach

RICHARD MACK Head Physiotherapist
LUKE ANTHONY Physiotherapist
ROBERT MCKAY Doctor
ROBERT BURGESS Team Manager



European Challenge Cup

Final



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JAKE BOER

Flanker. Born 1.11.75 in Cape Town, South Africa. 1.87m (6'1½"), 105kg (16st 7lb)

Jake Boer, who is qualified for the Netherlands as well as South Africa, is among the most consistent players in the domestic game. He is a highly popular figure at Kingsholm and had rarely missed a match before suffering a knee injury against Bath in February and returning only this month. Before signing for Gloucester, he had two years with London Irish, making 33 Premiership appearances for them. Has also played for Villagers, a South African club. Was the Premiership player of the season in 2003.



ALEX BROWN

Lock. Born 17.5.79 in Bristol. 2.00m (6'7"), 113kg (17st 11lb)

Alex Brown, an England A forward, signed for the Cherry and Whites in the summer of 2003 from Bristol and in January 2005 agreed a new three-year contract. Set a Premiership record of 87 consecutive appearance the previous October when overtaking Derek Eves' run of 81 for Bristol. Alex first played when five at the Clifton club and gained experience at Bath and Pontypool. He represented England Under-19s and 21s and was educated at Colston's Collegiate, Bristol.



PETER BUXTON

Back row. Born 21.8.78 in Cheltenham. 1.92m (6'3½"), 112kg (17st 9lb)

Peter Buxton has produced some match-winning performances since signing for Gloucester four seasons ago and provided an extra option with his ability to play at lock as well as in the back row. Has a penchant for driving play and appeared for England A against Scotland, Ireland and France four years ago while with Newport, the club he joined from Moseley. Played in every Premiership match last season and was awarded a new three-year contract in February last year. He captained Gloucester in the thrilling final Premiership match of this season against London Wasps.



PATRICE COLLAZO

Prop. Born 27.4.74 in La Seyne-sur-Mer, France. 1.85m (6'1"), 110kg (17st 3lb)

Patrice Collazo rejoined Gloucester last summer after two seasons with Toulouse. An accomplished forward in tight and loose, he has added power and experience to the Cherry & Whites' forward play and figured in five European Challenge Cup matches along the way to this final. Has also been a regular choice in Gloucester's Premiership team and would have won more than his one Test cap if his country had not been consistently strong in the pack. He was in the starting line up against Romania in May 2000, having been an unused bench replacement in two Tests against Argentina two years earlier.



MARK CORNWELL

Lock. Born 22.3.73 in Gloucester. 2.01m (6'7"), 117kg (18st 6lb)

Mark Cornwell has made six of his 11 England A appearances as a replacement – the first being against Ireland eight years ago and the most recent against Italy in April 2002 when he scored a try. Had played in the side that also lost to Wales at Ashton Gate, Bristol a fortnight earlier. Known as 'Pasty', he had been an England Colt and joined Gloucester in 1994 from Old Richians. Has benefited from playing with the Hamilton club in South Africa.



BRAD DAVIES

Fly half. Born 13.2.83 in Gloucester 1.77m (5'10"), 89kg (14st 11lb)

Brad Davies was a member of the England Under-21 Grand Slam team two years ago, is among a long list of Gloucester players educated at St Peter's School and combines his playing career with studies at the University of Gloucester. He played for England Under-18s three times in 2000 and was later involved in the Under-21s World Championship. Made two Premiership appearances in 2003-04 when becoming understudy to Duncan McRae and added another 15 in the next two seasons. Also achieved representative status in squash and swimming.



MEFIN DAVIES

Hooker. Born 2.9.72 in Nantgaredig. 1.78m (5'10"), 95kg (14st 13lb)

Mefin Davies relished sharing in Wales' Grand Slam last year and has taken his caps' total to 30, including four off the bench in this season's RBS 6 Nations Championship. His exploits a year ago climaxed 12 months in which he lost his job when Celtic Warriors became defunct, got married and became a father. He played semi-professional while going back to work as an engineer and then signing a new two-year contract with Gloucester. A former Pontypridd player, he enjoys a similar rugby-mad environment at Kingsholm where his future is now confirmed.





Gloucester Rugby



ROB ELLOWAY

Hooker. Born 9.11.83 in Rintein, Germany. 1.83m (6'0"), 98kg (15st 6lb)

Rob Elloway, who was educated at Sedbergh, made his Premiership debut for Gloucester when just 19 in the autumn of 2002. He is a forward of considerable potential and has made four appearances in the European Challenge Cup this season – playing twice against Toulon and twice against Bucharest against whom he scored a try. His other highlights this season include being in the starting line up for the 34-16 win over Leicester Tigers at Kingsholm in February.



ADAM EUSTACE

Lock. Born 9.1.79 in Gloucester. 1.95m (6'5"), 108kg (17st 0lb)

Adam Eustace, a strong and mobile forward, has worked his way through the club's academy and been converted from the back row to lock but is versatile enough to figure in either role. Made his Gloucester debut in 1998 after switching from Widden Old Boys and has been in the England Under-19s, 21s and A squads. Was invited to join the England Development set-up four seasons ago and has furthered his career impressively.



TERRY FANOLUA

Centre. Born 3.7.74 in Moto'otua, Samoa. 1.83m (6'0"), 94kg (14st 12lb)

Terry Fanolua, one of the first overseas players to head to Kingsholm alongside Philippe St André and Richard Tombs, has made more Premiership appearances than any other Gloucester player and is leaving after nine years. He has become a cult figure and won 27 caps for his native Samoa. Was a member of the 1999 and 2003 Rugby World Cup squads and has played for Auckland and Otahuhu, a club in New Zealand. Captained Samoa Sevens side and appeared in every position in the Gloucester backs except scrum half.



JAMES FORRESTER

Number 8. Born 9.2.81 in Oxford. 1.95m (6'5"), 104kg (16st 5lb)

James Forrester, a formidable back row presence, joined Gloucester from Bicester and has made considerable strides since being a member of the Kingsholm Academy five seasons ago. Made his England debut as a temporary replacement against Wales last year and won a second cap against Samoa last autumn. A regular try scorer from the scrum base, he has overcome injuries and his career highs include a stunning display for England XV against the Barbarians when he scored a 65-metre try, beating Jonah Lomu along the way. Has played for the England Sevens team.



JACK FORSTER

Prop. Born 19.3.87 in Wigan. 1.85m (6'1"), 122kg (19st 3lb)

Jack Forster, an emerging forward, was with Aspull (1996-98) and Sedgley Park (1998-2004) and also attached to Sale Sharks from 2003-05. He was head boy at Bolton School before heading to Hartpury College, near Gloucester. Played for England Under-16s and 18s before appearing for the England Under-19s this season. In his leisure time, he enjoys helping out his father, Chris, on the family's organic beef & lamb farm in Wigan. His rugby idols are Jason Leonard and Jonny Wilkinson and his most treasured possessions are his England age-group caps.



MARK FOSTER

Wing. Born 2.9.83 in Colchester. 1.83m (6'0"), 91kg (14st 3lb)

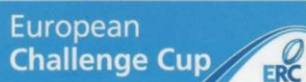
Mark Foster joined the Gloucester Academy at the age of 18 in the summer of 2002. He has since taken his career appearances towards 40, including six in the European Challenge Cup this season, a competition in which he has already scored four tries. Seized an opportunity during the 2005 RBS 6 Nations when Gloucester had representative calls, re-established himself in Dean Ryan's squad during pre-season and scored a hat trick of tries in a warm up match against Calvisano. He is one of Gloucester's talented youngsters to watch.



MARCEL GARVEY

Wing. Born 21.4.83 in Gloucester. 1.73m (5'8"), 89kg (14st 0lb)

Marcel Garvey has shown the blistering pace and forthright power that won him a place in the England National Academy. Has represented England A and scored a maiden try against Italy on his second appearance at that level three years ago. Ran in a stunning hat trick of tries on his home debut against Bristol Shoguns in 2002-03, signed a new three-year contract during the summer before last and was a key member of the England Under-21s side. Has also represented his country at under-18 and 19 level.



European Challenge Cup

Final



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JON GOODRIDGE

Full back. Born 26.2.81 in Hull. 1.86m (6'1"), 86kg (13st 8lb)

Jon Goodridge, a willowy full back, appeared in every Premiership match last season and has impressed with deceptive runs from deep in defence. He made his Gloucester debut five seasons ago at the age of 20 in the 35-10 defeat by London Irish at the Madejski Stadium. Played his early rugby at fly half and switched to the number 15 jersey while at the Gloucester Academy. He went with England Under-21 to the SANZAR tournament.



ANDY HAZELL

Flanker. Born 25.4.78 in Gloucester. 1.83m (6'0"), 93kg (14st 9lb)

Andy Hazell has won six England caps, the most recent against Scotland last year, represented the A team five times and produced an outstanding two-try display against Italy at Franklin's Gardens in 2002. He had played in both midweek games on England's tour of North America in 2001, scoring a try in the first against British Columbia. Was previously a member of the highly successful England Under-21 side and played for Old Richians and Gloucester Old Boys before making his Gloucester debut six-and-a-half seasons ago.



RUDI KEIL

Centre. Born 8.12.77 in Johannesburg, South Africa. 1.85m (6'1"), 85kg (13st 7lb)

Rudi Keil signed for Gloucester on an 18-month contract in December and arrived early the following month. Head coach, Dean Ryan, recruited him to add strength in depth before the RBS 6 Nations Championship. An exciting player, Rudi is comfortable in either the number 12 or 13 jersey, made his debut against Leicester Tigers in February and followed that with appearances against Newcastle Falcons and Bath Rugby later that month.



RYAN LAMB

Fly half. Born 18.5.86 in Gloucester. 1.76m (5'9"), 81kg (12st 10lb)

Ryan Lamb, the Guinness Man of the Match in the enthralling game against London Wasps earlier this month, excelled for this season's England Under-21 side that achieved the Grand Slam. An intuitive player with a penchant for making breaks, he was educated at Severn Vale School and St Peter's School, both in Gloucestershire, and already has a long list of representative honours. They include the England Under-16 A team and Under-18s and he has played Sevens in the 2004 Commonwealth Youth Games and for England Under-19s in the World Championship in Durban.



WILL MATTHEWS

Back row. Born 14.1.85 in Oxford. 1.88m (6'2"), 99kg (15st 8lb)

Will Matthews, a product of Millfield, that excellent sports academy, was recognised as a talented player by his inclusion in the England Junior Academy. He suffered the setback of a serious knee injury last season but his eager support play and competitive attitude at the breakdown matches his determination to succeed at top level.



DUNCAN McRAE

Fly half/Full back. Born 27.9.74 in Sydney, Australia. 1.72m (5'7 1/2"), 81kg (12st 10lb)

Duncan McRae, the man of the match in the 44-35 victory over Sale Sharks in the Zurich Wildcard semi-final at Kingsholm two seasons ago, has since added other dimensions to Gloucester's repertoire with a wide range of kicking and passing skills. He joined the Cherry and Whites in October 2003 after spells with the New South Wales Waratahs and Randwick. His Guinness Premiership experience before arriving at Kingsholm was with Saracens.



LUDOVIC MERCIER

Fly half. Born 1.11.76 in France. 1.80m (5'11"), 90kg (14st 2lb)

Ludovic Mercier has enjoyed many golden afternoons for Gloucester since being one of the shrewdest signings nationwide four seasons ago. He amassed more than 500 points in all competitions in his debut campaign and became the second fastest player to reach 500 Premiership points. He achieved it in 36 games, one more than Barry Everitt, of London Irish. In 2001-02, he scored 34 points in the Zurich Championship quarter-final against Newcastle Falcons and 23 against Bristol in the final. Returned to Gloucester this season after two years' absence.





Gloucester Rugby



JAMES MERRIMAN

Flanker. Born 17.1.84 in Haverfordwest. 1.83m (6'0"), 95kg (14st 13lb)

James Merriman joined Gloucester from Llandoverly College in the summer of 2002 and went on to play for the under-19s and 21s. The introduction of the Zurich A League gave him the opportunity to shine and he made his competitive debut against London Irish in the Powergen Cup in November 2003. A student at Hartpury College, he is quick and strong and played for Wales Under-21s – even appearing at Kingsholm, his home ground, against England in March 2004.



OLLY MORGAN

Full back. Born 3.11.85 in London. 1.89m (6'2 1/2"), 89kg (14st 11lb)

Olly Morgan, who was educated at Millfield, suffered a fractured jaw in the 37-32 defeat by London Wasps three weeks ago, an unfortunate end to his highly successful season. He made his debut last year for England Under-21s against Wales at Newport and was chosen for the subsequent IRB World Championship in Argentina. Had also appeared for England Under-16s and won eight caps for the Under-19s. Represented England Under-16s at hockey and competed at the prestigious English Schools Athletics finals in the pentathlon. Made his Premiership debut for Gloucester last season.



LUKE NARRAWAY

Back row. Born 7.9.83 in Worcester. 1.90m (6'3"), 100kg (15st 10lb)

Luke Narraway was schooled at King's, Worcester and graduated to the Gloucester team from his formative days as a member of the North Midlands Under-13s side. Has since played for England Under-18s against New Zealand at Twickenham and became an England Under-21 squad member. Made his Premiership debut against Leeds Tykes at Headingley Carnegie in May 2003 and relishes his role as a link in broken field attacking play.



JAMES PARKES

Hooker. Born 30.11.80 in Chelmsford. 1.78m (5'10"), 98kg (15st 6lb)

James Parkes, a former England Under-21 forward, signed for Gloucester from Saracens on an initial two-year contract in June 2004. He had Premiership experience for the Watford-based club after being a product of Ivybridge College, the Saracens' Partner School. Graduated from Saracens Under-21s into the first team. Had a brief spell on loan to Worcester Warriors at the end of the 2002-03 season before rejoining the Saracens squad.



JONATHAN PENDLEBURY

Lock. Born 15.1.83 in Mexborough, South Yorkshire. 1.94m (6'4 1/2"), 104kg (16st 5lb)

Jonathan Pendlebury arrived at Kingsholm last season from Earth Titans, formerly Rotherham, having first played for Wath-upon-Dearne, a Yorkshire Three club. He has made a fine impression this season and his appearances include five in the European Challenge Cup. At 23, he has a highly promising future in the game.



GARY POWELL

Prop. Born 30.10.79 in Church Village. 1.82m (6'0"), 112kg (17st 9lb)

Gary Powell became a Gloucester recruit from Leeds Tykes on a two-year contract in May 2004. When with London Wasps five years earlier, Nigel Melville, the former Gloucester director of rugby, had attempted to sign Gary when he was a pupil at Llandoverly and an outstanding Welsh Schools player at the time. He joined Leeds from Cardiff Blues and went on to make 20 starts and seven appearances as a replacement in a season for the Yorkshire club.



PETER RICHARDS

Scrum half. Born 10.3.78 in Portsmouth. 1.75m (5'9"), 93kg (14st 9lb)

Peter Richards, who joined Gloucester this season, has rugby playing days dating back to tentative steps for Havant Under-Eights before moving to Farnham and linking with the Wilkinson brothers, Jonny and Mark. He is uncapped but toured Australia, New Zealand and South Africa with England in 1998, was on the England bench against Samoa last autumn and has excelled for the England Sevens team. Wore the colours of London Irish, from 1996 onwards, and NEC Harlequins before heading to Bristol, London Wasps and now Gloucester.



European Challenge Cup

Final



errugby.com



TERRY SIGLEY

Prop. Born 12.10.78 in Sutton Coldfield. 1.87m (6'2"), 123kg (19st 4lb)

Terry Sigley, a late developer to the full-time professional game, stepped up to Kingsholm at the age of 25 in July 2004 on short-term deal after attracting attention when his club, Pertemps Bees, enjoyed a Powergen Cup run. He was so impressive that he began the season at the club and was offered – and signed – a three-year contract in February. Powerful and direct with ball in hand, he adds flexibility to the front row through his ability to play on both sides of the scrum. In a two-year spell, he had toured Chile, Romania and France with the England Counties' squad.



JAMES SIMPSON-DANIEL

Wing/Centre. Born 30.5.82 in Stockton-on-Tees. 1.80m (5'11"), 85kg (13st 5lb)

James Simpson-Daniel, an elusive runner with blistering pace, was educated at Sedbergh and has won nine England caps, his most recent as a replacement against Italy last February when he scored his second Test try. He is a past winner of the Premiership try of the season award and also shared in England's Sevens success in Hong Kong. Scored two tries in Gloucester's Powergen Cup final triumph over Northampton Saints three years ago and is the second eldest of four competitive siblings. Brother Mark, four years his junior, is a scrum half.



ROB THIRLBY

Wing. Born 2.3.79 in Penzance. 1.86m (6'1"), 89kg (14st 0lb)

Rob Thirlby began his Premiership career with Saracens, having graduated from Penzance-Newlyn, now Cornish Pirates. He also played for Bath before moving to Kingsholm on a two-year contract. His pace and running skills have also made him a talented sevens player and he appeared in the 2002 Commonwealth Games and the following year scored a hat trick of tries to secure a 38-14 win over New Zealand in the IRB South Africa Sevens final in Georgia.



HAYDN THOMAS

Scrum half. Born 17.9.82 in Marston Green. 1.73m (5'8"), 78kg (12st 4lb)

Haydn Thomas, who signed for Gloucester this season on a two-year contract, is enjoying the benefits of working alongside assistant coach and former Scotland scrum half. Haydn first played as a five year old at the Bridport club and was there until the age of 16 when he switched to Bath Rugby. He has played in seven European Challenge Cup matches this season and scored two tries.



MIKE TINDALL

Centre. Born 18.10.78 in Otley. 1.88m (6'2"), 100kg (15st 10lb)

Mike Tindall MBE, who combines the bludgeon with the rapier in his attacking armoury, signed for Gloucester this season after eight years with Bath Rugby and has won 49 England caps. He figured in all except one of England's seven RWC matches in 2003 and illustrated his gritty qualities in the final success over Australia. Was educated at Queen Elizabeth Grammar School, Wakefield, for whom he played in two Daily Mail Cup finals. Mike won the final of ITV1's All Star Poker Challenge, earning £25,000 for the Parkinson's Disease Charity.



PHIL VICKERY

Prop. Born 14.3.76 in Barnstaple. 1.90m (6'3"), 116kg (18st 4lb)

Phil Vickery MBE, who is joining London Wasps this summer on a three-year contract, was appointed as Gloucester's captain four seasons ago, having made the first of 47 Test appearances in 1998 against Wales. His forceful scrummaging and power in the loose has been appreciated far beyond the electric atmosphere of Kingsholm but despite attaining the highest levels, he has endured an injury-hit career. Shared in England's 2003 RWC triumph, having played in the three Lions' tests against Australia in 2001. Made 104 appearances for Gloucester in all competitions, spanning 11 years.



NICK WOOD

Prop. Born 9.1.83 in Swindon. 1.86m (6'1"), 108kg (17st 0lb)

Nick Wood was a member of the England Under-21 Grand Slam winning squad two seasons ago and joined Gloucester, his first club, in 2001 after leaving Radley College. Has played for England Under-18s, appeared off the bench for England in the A international against Ireland at Kingsholm in March and has also representative honours in hockey. He stepped up into the Gloucester first-team squad in 2003-04, having graduated through the club's academy.



Final



GLOUCESTER RUGBY

LONDON IRISH



- 15 Rob Thirlby
- 14 James Simpson-Daniel
- 13 Mike Tindall
- 12 Anthony Allen
- 11 Mark Foster

- 10 Ryan Lamb
- 9 Peter Richards

- 1 Patrice Collazo
- 2 Mefin Davies
- 3 Jack Forster
- 4 Jonathan Pendlebury
- 5 Alex Brown
- 6 Peter Buxton (Captain)
- 7 Andy Hazell
- 8 James Forrester

- Replacements
- 16 Olivier Azam
 - 17 Gary Powell
 - 18 Adam Eustace
 - 19 Luke Narraway
 - 20 Haydn Thomas
 - 21 Ludovic Mercier
 - 22 James Bailey

TIED EUROPEAN CHALLENGE CUP FINAL

In the event of a tie at full-time, the winner shall be determined by reference to the following rules:

- (i) Extra time of 20 minutes (consisting of two periods of 10 minutes each way)
- (ii) The team that has scored the most tries in the final (including extra time)
- (iii) The winner of the final will be determined by a place-kick competition (see page 8)



- Delon Armitage 15
- Topsy Ojo 14
- Rodd Penney 13
- (Captain) Mike Catt 12
- Sailosi Tagicakibau 11

- Riki Flutey 10
- Paul Hodgson 9

- Neal Hatley 1
- Robbie Russell 2
- Richard Skuse 3
- Bob Casey 4
- Kieran Roche 5
- Declan Danaher 6
- Olivier Magne 7
- Juan Manuel Leguizamon 8

- Replacements
- Tom Warren 16
 - David Paice 17
 - Nick Kennedy 18
 - Phil Murphy 19
 - Gonzalo Tiesi 20
 - Ben Willis 21
 - Barry Everitt 22

Referee: Nigel Whitehouse (Wales) Touch Judges: Nigel Owens (Wales) and Hugh Watkins (Wales) TMO: Gareth Simmonds (Wales)



European Challenge Cup

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European Challenge Cup

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How they



GLOUCESTER RUGBY 2005-2006

Round 1

Bayonne 10 Gloucester Rugby 26

Bayonne: *Try*: L Massabeau;

Con: H Vermis; *Pen*: H Vermis

Gloucester Rugby: *Tries*: M Davies, H Thomas, M Tindall; *Con*: L Mercier; *Pens*: L Mercier (3)

Round 2

Gloucester Rugby 106 Bucuresti 3

Gloucester Rugby: *Penalty try*; *Tries*: J Simpson-Daniel (4), R Thirlby (2), M Garvey (2), N Wood, A Eustace, A Hazell, L Narraway, H Thomas, J Forrester, A Allen; *Cons*: L Mercier (10), S Amor (3)
Bucuresti: *Pen*: I Andrei

Round 3

Toulon 3 Gloucester Rugby 74

Toulon: *Pen*: C Rossouw

Gloucester Rugby: *Tries*: J Boer (2), P Richards (2), M Foster (2), J Forrester, M Tindall, M Garvey, G Powell; *Cons*: L Mercier (6), D McRae (3);
Pens: L Mercier (2)

Round 4

Gloucester Rugby 66 Toulon 5

Gloucester Rugby: *Tries*: J Boer (2), J Simpson-Daniel (2), N Wood, G Powell, A Brown, A Balding, J Forrester, P Richards; *Cons*: L Mercier (5), D McRae (3)
Toulon: *Try*: F Comba

Round 5

Bucuresti 13 Gloucester Rugby 27

Bucuresti: *Try*: C Nicolae; *Con*: D Dumbrava;
Pens: D Dumbrava (2)

Yellow cards: D Carpo (37), N Nere (68)

Gloucester Rugby: *Tries*: R Elloway, J Boer, P Richards, *penalty try*; *Cons*: S Amor, L Mercier;
Pen: S Amor

Round 6

Gloucester Rugby 32 Bayonne 19

Gloucester Rugby: *Tries*: G Powell (2), M Tindall, O Morgan; *Cons*: L Mercier (3); *Pens*: L Mercier (2).
Bayonne: *Tries*: B Thierry, C Laurent, A Iguiniz;
Cons: R Dourthe (2)

Quarter-final

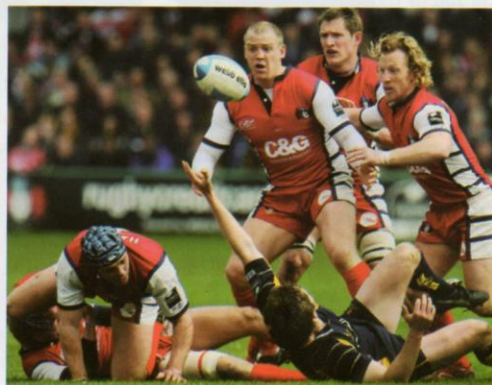
Gloucester Rugby 46 Brive 13

Gloucester Rugby: *Tries*: J Forrester (2), P Richards (2), A Hazell, M Tindall, J Simpson-Daniel;
Cons: R Lamb (4); *Pen*: R Lamb
Brive: *Try*: Y Donguy; *Con*: M Petitjean;
Pens: M Petitjean (2)

Semi-final

Gloucester Rugby 31 Worcester Warriors 23

Gloucester Rugby: *Tries*: M Foster, A Allen, J Simpson-Daniel; *Cons*: R Lamb (2);
Pens: R Lamb (3), L Mercier
Worcester Warriors: *Tries*: P Sanderson, S Drahm;
Cons: S Drahm (2); *Pens*: S Drahm (2); *DG*: S Drahm



Gloucester centre Mike Tindall tries to take a loose ball during the Semi final against Worcester Warriors at Kingsholm

