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GLOUCESTER RUGBY

OFFICIAL MATCHDAY PROGRAMME

AMLIN CHALLENGE CUP
VS. SU AGEN
20 JANUARY 2011, KO 7.45PM // £3



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RYAN MILLS

ROAD TO RECOVERY

Amlin Challenge Cup Round 6

Amlin
Challenge Cup



MIKE TINDALL

Captain's Corner



It seems slightly strange to be preparing these notes and talking about Thursday night fixture at Kingsholm!

I'm sure the club statistician can put me right but I honestly can't remember us playing on a Thursday before.

I guess it's a sign of the times and the desire to televise as many fixtures as possible over a European weekend.

Thursday games in the Amlin Challenge Cup have been with us for a couple of years now and, as we found out against La Rochelle just before Christmas, games can kick off as late as 5:45pm on a Sunday evening.

On the subject of La Rochelle, their win down in Agen last Thursday has put them in a strong position in the group and we now have to rely on Rovigo causing an upset if we are to have any chance of qualifying.

Credit to La Rochelle. Before they beat us at Kingsholm, they hadn't

won on their travels at all. They've since won at Bourgoin and at Agen so something has obviously clicked for them.

So the boys travelled out to Italy last weekend knowing that the odds of them qualifying had lengthened significantly which makes the professional job that they did over there even more impressive.

We'd made quite a few changes and there were new combinations all across the park. And talking to those on duty, there weren't many people at all in the stadium (apart from the vocal travelling support!) and not much of an atmosphere.

Despite what happened against Rovigo at Kingsholm, I don't think anyone actually expected another 90 point performance and I think that, in the circumstances, a 55-7 scoreline isn't a bad effort at all.

Putting the result to one side, it was an important game for a number of reasons. Quite a few of the guys hadn't had much of an opportunity

to get some first team action of late and, with the Six Nations just around the corner, we need as many people battle hardened as possible.

It was also important for us to maintain a winning habit. We had a good result at home to Exeter the previous week and want to maintain that form and momentum going into the next few weeks.

Once tonight is over, we have a couple of big LV= Cup matches coming up and then we return to Aviva Premiership actions.

We're currently in sixth place with a couple of games in hand so we we're not too badly placed. However, we have to get something from those games in hand if we're to consolidate a Heineken Cup qualifying position and push for the play offs.

We know we're capable of it and tonight is another important step in the process.

Enjoy the game!

GLOUCESTER
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On behalf of everyone at Gloucester Rugby, I'd like to wish the players, staff and supporters of SU Agen a very warm welcome to Kingsholm this evening.

It's been an unusual week for us. Thursday nights are a bit out of the ordinary for although we did play an LV= Cup game against the Dragons at Rodney Parade on a Thursday evening earlier this season.

It's been a short week, however, with us only returning from Italy late on Sunday afternoon.

It means that the playing department won't have had the benefit of a day off this week as we try and squeeze a week's worth of work into just three days and Agen, of course, will have the benefit of a couple more days of rest and preparation.

As things stand, at the time of writing these notes, I'm not sure exactly what sort of side we'll be coming up against this evening. Agen were right in the mix in terms of winning the group until they came unstuck against La Rochelle last week.

That result leaves La Rochelle in the box seat as they entertain Rovigo this evening with ourselves and Agen three and four points behind respectively. So, whoever wins tonight also needs Rovigo to do them a favour – Forza Italia!

Fair play to La Rochelle, I don't think many people would have picked them out as potential group winners at the start of the season. But they've turned around what had been a pretty dismal away record and picked up some good wins on the road. For our part, when we sat down and talked about the group after the game last Saturday,

the main feeling was one of frustration.

We got ourselves into a very good position in the opening round down in Agen before allowing them back into the game and did the hard work by winning in La Rochelle before losing to them in the return leg just a week later.

It's all ifs and buts at this stage. However, we fancied ourselves to make the knockout stages of this competition and we need to finish this final pool game on a high note tonight.



Given that we knew that La Rochelle had won in Agen, I was pleased overall with the job that we did in Rovigo last weekend.

It's not easy to lift your game when you travel to a small arena like Stadio Mario Battaglini. When our team bus pulled up, there were so few people around that someone asked if we'd turned up on the right day!

So, we had to create our own atmosphere in a way and we were certainly helped by the presence of what looked like a couple of hundred Gloucester supporters.

I'm stating the obvious but, when you travel anywhere in Europe to play, it always give you a lift to see the Gloucester shirts and flags. We appreciated the effort they made.

On the pitch, it was a professional job. We'd made a few changes and there were some players out there who hadn't had much game time of late.

I was pleased with the lads who came in. The Six Nations is coming up and we'll obviously lose a few to international duty so it was a good chance for some of them to come in and put their hands up to play.

It's good to get games under their belt as we'll be making full use of the squad over the next few weeks.

It wasn't perfect and we were a little bit disappointed to concede a second half try but we scored eight of our own which was a pretty good return.

It also maintained the momentum that we created with the win last time here at Kingsholm over the Chiefs.

That was an important match for us because we'd slipped up at Leeds on New Year's Day and we needed the points to maintain the push for a Heineken Cup place.

We knew the Chiefs would be far from a pushover and they certainly lived up to that on the day.

On a couple of occasions, we thought that we'd just about put them away but they kept coming back at us and that's credit to them. They've been a worthy addition to the Aviva Premiership this season.

Momentum is important and winning is a habit so, regardless of what's happening in La Rochelle, we'll be pushing hard for the win.

We can't influence anything elsewhere, we can only take care of our own business. And, as Agen proved in round one, they can be a handful so we'll need to be at our best.

Enjoy the game!



EXCLUSIVE
**HEAD
COACH**
NOTES

**"MOMENTUM IS
IMPORTANT AND
WINNING IS A HABIT
SO, REGARDLESS OF
WHAT'S HAPPENING
IN LA ROCHELLE,
WE'LL BE PUSHING
HARD FOR THE WIN."**

**BRYAN
REDPATH**



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View from
The Citizen



with Nick Purewal

this is gloucestershire.co.uk



Bryan Redpath: "...doing the right things at the right times..."

Quarter final qualification not on offer, Bryan Redpath has told his Gloucester stars to chase a different opportunity against Agen tonight.

Cherry and Whites boss Redpath has accepted inevitable defeat in the bid to reach the Amlin Challenge Cup last eight, effectively as soon as La Rochelle beat Agen a week ago today.

Les Rochelais host Rovigo this weekend, and that's all that need be said about their progression to winning the group and claiming the quarter final spot.

Gloucester eased past the Italian whipping boys on Saturday, with a host of players returning from injury or staking claims for more regular first XV rugby.

Two LV=Cup fixtures follow tonight's final European adventure, and with the Six Nations around the corner, Gloucester head coach Redpath is well aware his squad will be stretched to its limit once again.

That means everyone will get rugby, will receive the chances they are after – so the former Scotland scrum half wants as many of his players match ready as possible.

Tim Taylor and Tim Molenaar turned in good showings against Rovigo, the former stealing two tries off the bench and the latter offering physical stability in midfield.

Both will be tasked with producing



more of the same over the next month and beyond, and Redpath expects those two and more to prove their worth in non-Premiership action before the league gets back into swing.

He explained: "We've got the LV coming up, we're more or less out of the Amlin which we accept, but there's internationals coming up and we've got to get guys in shape to deal with that.

"I thought Tim Taylor came on and did well in Italy, Tim Molenaar played 80 minutes for the A team last Monday night, and played another 80 in Italy.

"If you can do those right things consistently, over time that stands you in great stead for the times when you find yourself up against it, really squeezed in tight situations."

"Both of those men went well against Rovigo, and there'll be plenty more opportunities coming up.

"These competitions allow opportunities that the Premiership wouldn't, so you've got to take advantage of those, and they are very timely in this month.

"That's the challenge for these guys, to show what they can do in these situations, and show how that can transfer into Premiership situations."

Gloucester's Challenge Cup troubles started with 19-13 turnaround defeat at Agen – but Redpath has



not told his men to avenge that defeat, he has told them to learn from it.

Calling on his side to continue building the trends and patterns that will serve them well in their continuing bid to hit the Premiership playoff picture, Redpath said Premiership standards must permeate all competitions

Gloucester contest.

He continued: "It's not about revenge, it's about atoning for that 13-3 deficit we let slip.

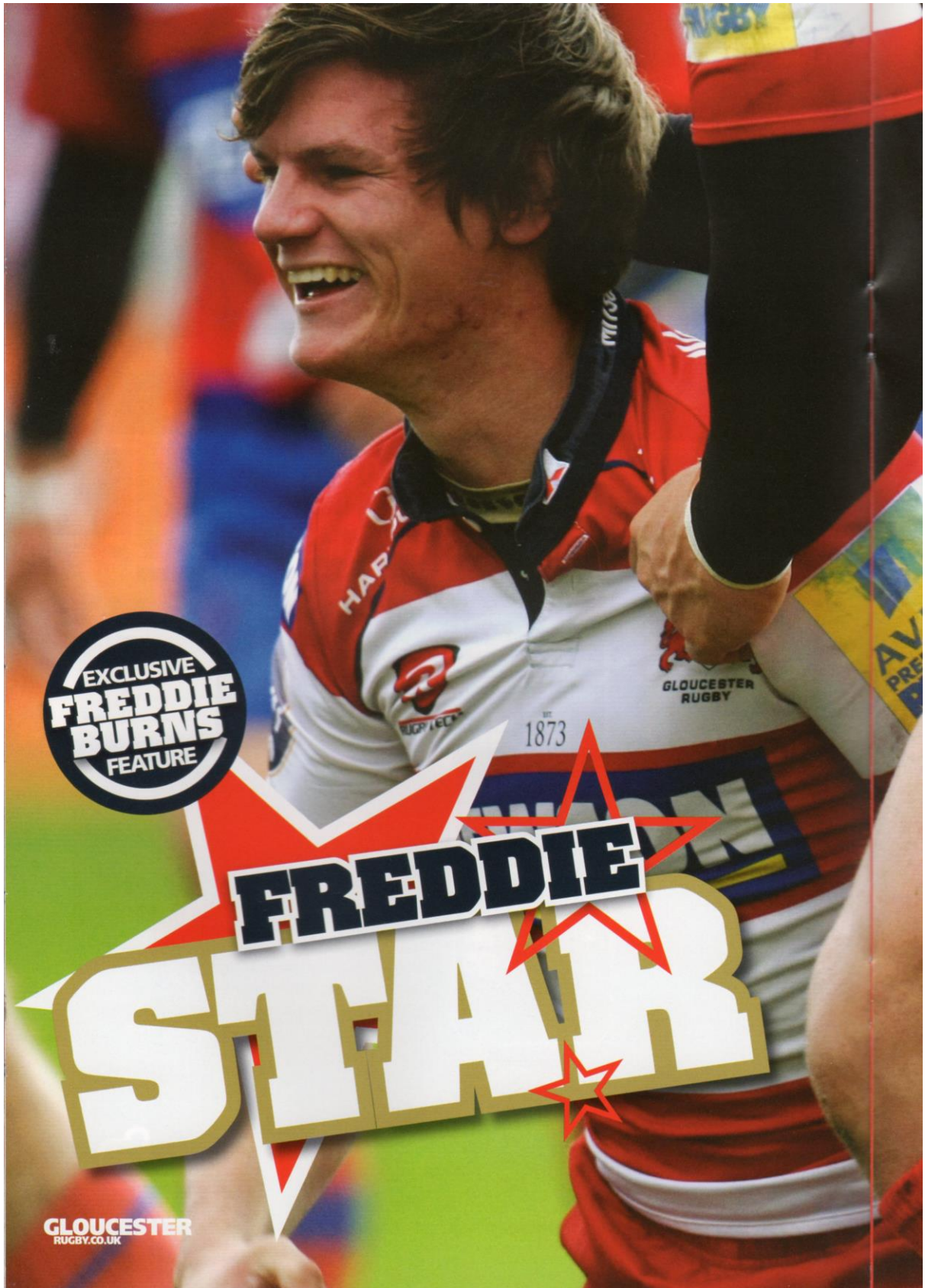
"It's about how we manage the game and how we understand what we need to do to win a game that will be physical, will be tight and will be tough.

"You've got to build trends of doing the right things at the right times, whatever the scenario and whatever the competition or opposition.

"If you can do those right things consistently, over time that stands you in great stead for the times when you find yourself up against it, really squeezed in tight situations."



"That's the challenge for these guys, to show what they can do in these situations, and show how that can transfer into Premiership situations."



EXCLUSIVE
**FREDDIE
BURNS**
FEATURE

FREDDIE STAR

GLOUCESTER
RUGBY.CO.UK

The joint Testimonial match for Andy Hazell and Lee Mears back in August 2009 was a memorable day for both players concerned.

However, it was also a significant day for Gloucester Rugby in that it marked the first occasion that a young fly half called Freddie Burns was unveiled to the Kingsholm faithful.

At that point, little did anyone realise what a roller coaster ride the 2009-10 season would represent for the 20 year old Bath born playmaker.

Less than 18 months down the line, in the lobby of a Padova hotel ahead of the Amlin Challenge Cup tie against Rovigo, Freddie reflected on an eventful few months.

"It's been a really good year for me and I'm starting to push a bit more now and get a bit more game time with more responsibility which is exactly what I want. It's going better than expected really."

"The Cardiff game was a stand out partly because of the results we'd had against them the year before. It was good to get a bit of payback in a big game like a semi final."

And the try itself? Modesty prevails...

"It was just one of those things. I heard Andy Powell calling for it and I thought I'd shoot out of the line and see if I could get it. Luckily I did because, if I didn't, they'd have been down the other end!"

The final itself, against Northampton Saints, also turned out to be one of the games of the club season with Gloucester unfortunately just edged out.

"I remember the game just passed by so quickly. It was a massive eye opener for me just to play in a big final like that especially in my first year."

"Unfortunately, we just lost but I valued the experience. It wasn't a nice feeling to lose but it gives you the motivation to try and go one better."

By this point, rugby pundits outside of Gloucester were starting to sit up and take notice and a televised Man of the Match performance against Saracens added to his

was walking back after scoring the try and still didn't realise his shorts were down until Christian Wade slapped his backside!"

On to 2010-11. American sports writers talk frequently about the 'sophomore' season and the difficulties that athletes have in their second campaign. Did he feel any pressure this time around?

"I actually like the pressure, that's one of the reasons I play fly half. I like to be in control and calling the shots. Even though I'm still only 20 and one of the younger guys in the squad, at fly half you can't afford to be a passenger. You have to call the shots."

"I'm working on it and I feel as though I'm coming out of my shell as I get more game time. I'm playing fly half more than full back which is good. There is more expectation but I'm getting used to it and I'm enjoying it."

Being part of a talented young group of players helps, a group who get on with each other just as well off the field.

"I ACTUALLY LIKE THE PRESSURE, THAT'S ONE OF THE REASONS I PLAY FLY HALF."

A gentle introduction to first team action via a number of replacement appearances saw Burns get a taste for the big game atmosphere and he really started to shine in the LV=Cup.

However, just as he was starting to feel really at home, he was sidelined by surgery to cure a frustrating calf problem which was causing him to cramp up around the hour mark.

"It was really tough. You get the bug for playing in first team games so to have that layoff was a bit of a setback but I had youth on my side and it didn't take too long to get back into the mix."

"It was definitely a tough time especially when you just want to get out there and help the boys out. You want to start every game but it's just a case of being patient. And patience probably wasn't my best quality last season!"

Once back though, he wasted little time making some significant contributions to the remainder of Gloucester's season, not least a game changing interception against Cardiff in the LV=Cup semi final.

growing reputation.

"I don't know what happened. I woke up, looked outside and it was raining and Kingsholm was a bit boggy. Not perfect!"

"But it was a great team performance and fantastic to beat a team like Saracens who had been doing so much prior to that. It went well for me but it was on the back of a good team performance."

With Gloucester's season over, the ultimate recognition came as Freddie was voted Young Player of the Season by the club's supporters.

"I couldn't believe it. It hadn't even crossed my mind. To get that sort of recognition, especially from the fans, is a humbling experience and it's got pride of place on the mantelpiece."

A summer off might have been appropriate but the U20 Junior World Cup in Argentina beckoned. England were beaten semi finalists but it was one of Freddie's Gloucester team mates, Jonny May, who caught the eye for the wrong reasons as he scored a try minus his shorts!

"(Laughs) It could only happen to Jonny! What made it even funnier was that he

"That's something that really excites me about being at Gloucester. We've got a great set of youngsters coming through and hopefully we'll all carry on developing and become even better players."

"We're all good mates off the park as well. We share a couple of flats and do our best to chill out when we're not training or playing."

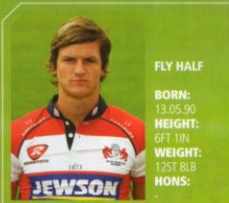
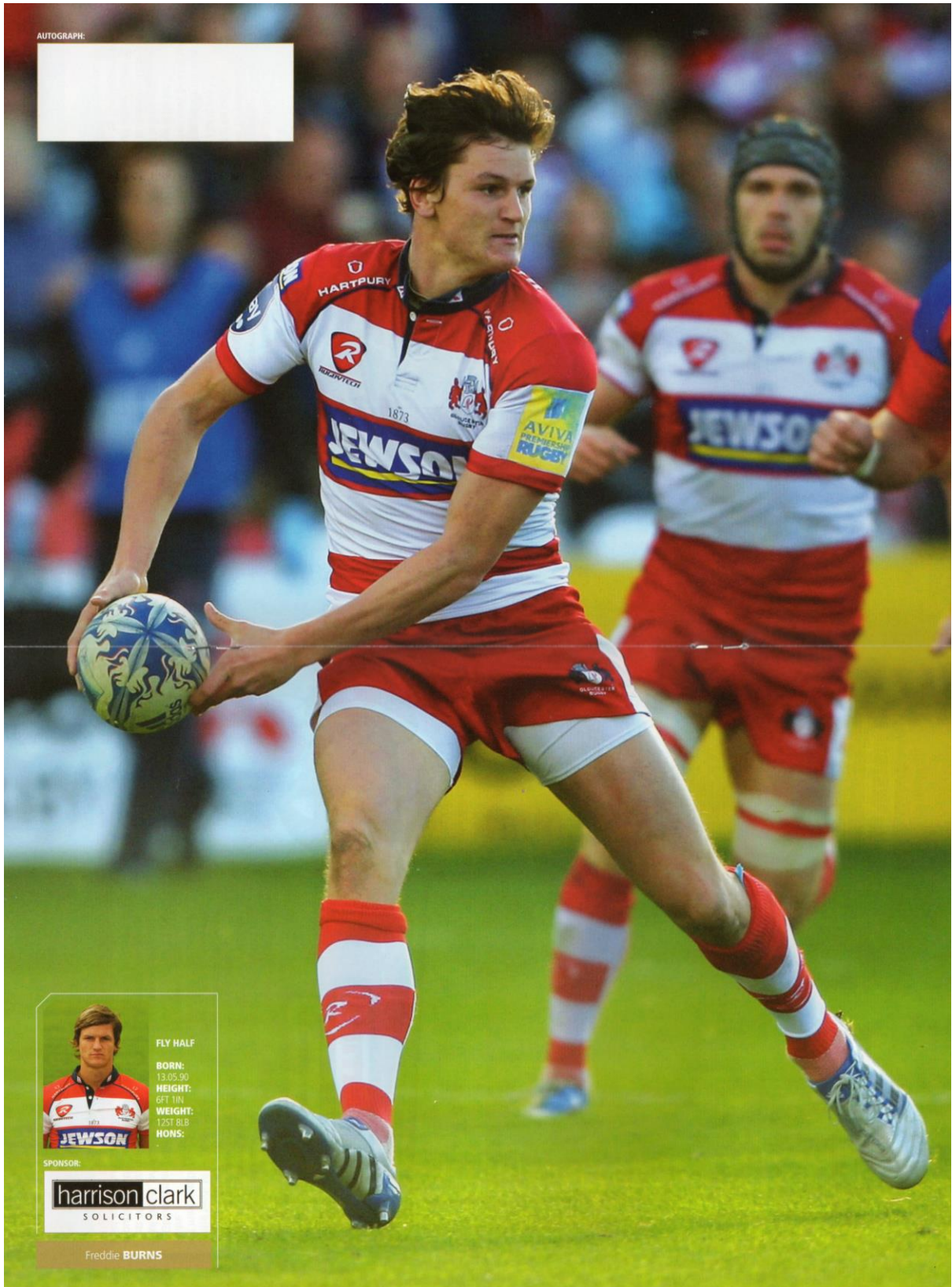
"It's always going to come up in conversation now and again but we're just a normal set of lads. We go for coffee, to the cinema, all the usual stuff."

Progress in Europe now looks unlikely but Freddie is ever the optimist as he looks at the rest of the season.

"There's still a lot to play for especially if we can improve our away form. We could then easily be a top four side and challenge at the top."

"We all want to bring some silverware back to Gloucester. It'd be superb if we could achieve success for the fans and also for Tom (Walkinshaw) who did so much for the club and for all of us as individuals."

AUTOGRAPH:



FLY HALF

BORN:
13.05.90
HEIGHT:
6FT 1IN
WEIGHT:
125T B.L.B
HONS:

SPONSOR:

harrison clark
SOLICITORS

Freddie BURNS

Kingsholm News

with Bob Fenton



IT seems that any day is rugby day now... in the dim and distant past 3pm on a Saturday was just about 'the' time to roll up to your local rugby club for kick off,

With clubs electing to play on Sundays or Friday nights, and TV giving us odder and odder kick off times so we don't clash with X Factor's Got Talent Strictly In A Jungle On Ice or some such tosh it was only a matter of time before that hallowed old moment became almost a rarity.

But this is the first time I can ever remember having a match that kicked off on a Thursday. I'm lucky these days, not only do I live a short hop from the stadium I also

work in the area too.

This time last year I would have been pulling my hair out trying to get back from Wolverhampton in time for kick off.

I guess that's the downside of professionalism and the fact that it's largely the money from TV that keeps the Premiership in the rude health that it currently enjoys. You takes the money you takes the strange kick of times and scheduling that goes with it. Doesn't make it easy for the supporters though...

Still, that wasn't a problem a couple of Saturday's ago when Exeter came a calling. I have to say that I was probably the least confident in ages

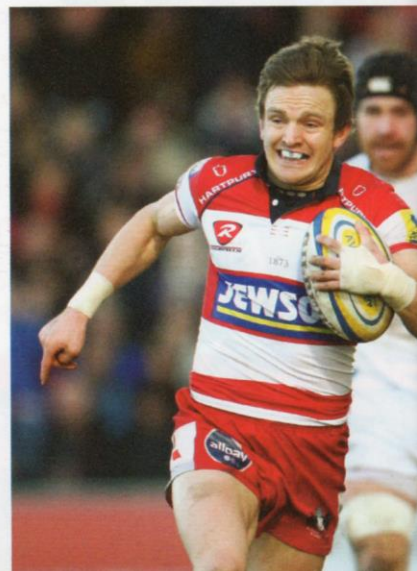
of a home win. I know, ye of little faith. But as I said before, Exeter have proved a tough nut to crack.

But crack them we did, with Sinbad running wild and Rory Lawson grabbing with what must have been his longest try-scoring run – in fact some scurrilous insiders in the club say that is the furthest he has ever run – only to see an Olly Morgan effort surpass it.

What made that game even more enjoyable was the group of about 25 Exeter fans who had staked a claim to the middle of The Shed just in front of us.

Dressed for some odd reason in headgear that looked to be in Bath's colours they kept up their singing and shouting throughout the match, and seemed to enjoy the banter with all around them.

Quality people and so much of an opposite to the group of moronic muppets that turned up for the



77 ONLY WHEN THE TEAM RAN OUT DID I REALISE THAT IT WAS CAUCAU HIMSELF – AND THERE WAS ME EXPECTING SOME LITHE ATHLETIC SPEEDSTER, NOT SOMEONE WHO LOOKED LIKE THE BEFORE PERSON IN A SLIMMING ADVERT!

Saracens match a few weeks ago.

I don't for one minute believe that those guys were Saracens fans, they were a little rent-a-mob there to make a bit of a scene for reasons that I'll never fully understand.

I know that their presence has been the subject of a spiky bit of correspondence between the clubs. For what it's worth I think they – and Saracens – should just grow up a bit...

But back to the Exeter boys, they showed why our chosen sport is such a great one. Opposing fans standing chatting, drinking and taking the mick out of each other for a few hours with no hint of aggression or tension.

Wonderful, who needs segregation and doesn't it add to the atmosphere in the ground.

But today then... Well by the time you read this, this match may be a bit of a lost cause. Depending how the results have gone over the last weekend the door on our qualification from the group may have been closed already. To be fair when we lost at home to La Rochelle the boat was pretty much out of the harbour, but you have to hope, don't you?

Agen will present a challenge, and, again depending on the results from last weekend, could be needing a big win to secure their own qualification. Some revenge for our defeat down their earlier in the season would be good for us though.

Seeing Agen up here again reminds

me of their last visit a few years back. If I recall correctly that was a game we needed to win, but let it slip away. They had that Fijian superstar Rupeni Caucau playing for them that day.

I remember looking around their team during the warm up trying to spot him but not being able to pick him out.

The only thing going on was their physio seemingly giving a late fitness test to a prop who would have been the prime suspect in a 'Who ate all the pies' line up. He was trundling around for ages and it seemed a lost cause.

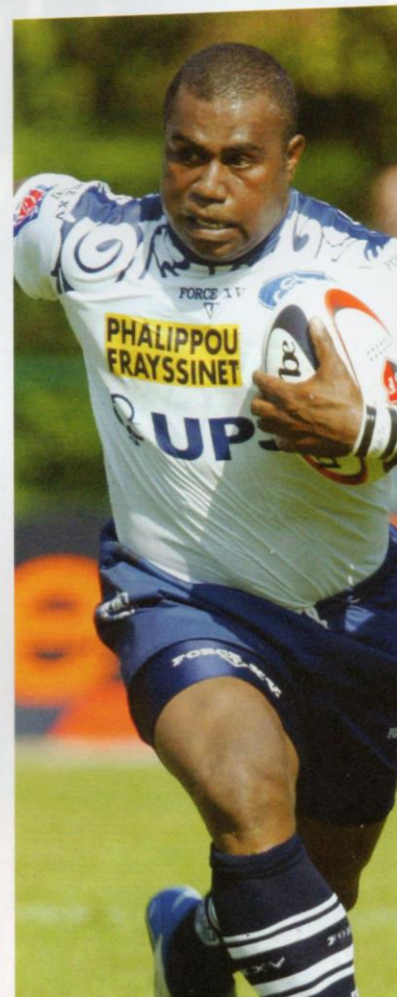
Only when the team ran out did I realise that it was Caucau himself – and there was me expecting some lithe athletic speedster, not someone who looked like the before person in a slimming advert!

Then he got the ball... Man alive can look deceive or what? He wasn't the fastest guy on the field, but what skills he possessed.

Despite his girth he sidestepped through gaps you would fancy would be the domain of only a Simpson-Daniel type winger. No wonder Chris Paterson was moved to say that 'When he's fit he can be the best player in the world. He can win a game almost on his own...'

Well he did that day, that's for sure. Despite his problems Caucau is, apparently, still playing, he's on the books at Toulouse I believe.

If he had controlled his intake – and we're not just talking food



here – and his penchant for simply disappearing from the clubs he was supposed to be serving we may well have been talking about him as one of the best in the world.

Glad he's not here today though, it's going to be hard enough to win without him, and in Sinbad we have enough 'mercurial geniuses' (© all newspapers) on the pitch already.



Dave King's
WORLD OF RUGBY

This evening we play our 94th match in European Rugby Cup competitions. The eagerly anticipated entry into Europe commenced on 12th October 1996 when we met Welsh opposition, Ebbw Vale in a European Conference fixture.

A resounding victory followed with a 59 points to seven success. Tries by Audley Lumsden, Alastair Saverimutto, Eral Anderson and Simon Devereux and a penalty try were enhanced by the metronomic place kicking of Mark Mapletoft.

Mark's contribution enabled him to record seven conversions. He surpassed his outstanding ability with the boot by scoring four tries as well!

That season of 1996-1997 witnessed only one player making maximum appearances, Alastair Saverimutto, who appeared in all five of our matches in the Conference.

No fewer than thirty-two players appeared in that season they were as follows: Chris Catling, Eral Anderson, Alastair Saverimutto, Adrian Metcalf, Audley Lumsden, Mark Mapletoft, Scott Benton, Tony Windo, Phil Greening, Phil Vickery, Rob Fidler, David Sims, Rob York, Andrew Stanley, Simon Devereux, Trevor Woodman, Dave Timmington, Laurie Beck, Aidie Powles, Mike Peters, Mark Cornwell, Ed Pearce, Nathan Carter, Don Caskie, Paul Holford, Warren Bullock, Adrian Morris, John Hawker, Lee Fortey, Ian Smith, Martin Roberts and Andy Deacon.

European Cup competition has been in operation for 15 seasons. We have been involved in fourteen of those.

The anomaly occurred in the 1998-1999 season when English clubs decided to boycott all European Competition. In the fourteen seasons where we have participated, eight have been in the Heineken Cup.

The lower tier competition has had several guises beside the Conference, there has been the European Shield, Challenge Cup and now the Amlin Challenge Cup during our seasons of participation.

No player has made a more significant impact for this club in Europe than James Simpson-Daniel.

Prior to our home fixture with La Rochelle he had made 48 full appearances with 3 as a replacement. His try scoring record is without parallel with 35 tries.

Those tries have seen James score 18 tries in the Heineken Cup and 17 in the second tier competition.

In the players appearance record, Terry Fanolua trails James with 43 full appearances and 4 as a replacement.



6 Oct 2000, Ian Jones and Andy Gomarsall lead the discussions against Ulanelli at Stradey Park.

CALENDAR

Peter Buxton follows in the wake of Terry with 40 full appearances and 11 as a replacement, with Phil Vickery close behind with 37 full appearances and 3 as a replacement.

Fewer players have been used in the Heineken Cup Competition as the following figures indicate:

2001-2002 – 32, 2002-2003 – 27,
2003-2004 – 26, 2004-2005 – 28,
2006-2007 – 29, 2007-2008 – 27,
2008-2009 – 31, 2009-2010 – 32.

In the second tier competition we have used 1997-1997 – 30, 1999-2000 – 34, 2001-2002 – 32, 2005-2006 – 36. So, each season of competition has seen thirty plus players participating.

We have met Biarritz more than any other club in Europe with six matches between the clubs. Cardiff, Munster and Bourgoin have been played on five occasions. Ulster, La Rochelle and Toulon have figured in four matches while Stade Francais and Agen have been played in three matches.

Clubs we have met twice include Newport, Bezier, Glasgow, Calvisano, Ospreys, Edinburgh, Leinster, Roma, Padova, Bucharest, Wasps, London Irish, Bayonne, Perpignan, Llanelli, Colomiers, Bridgend, Ebbw Vale, Viadana, Treviso, Caerphilly, Spain,

Gran Parma and Rovigo while Leicester, Sale, Swansea, Begles Bordeaux, Worcester, Brive have been met once.

The most amazing incident to occur in any of the 93 matches we have played in Europe surely came in the 2000-2001 season when qualification from our pool containing Llanelli, Colomiers and Roma rested on defeating the Scarlets here at Kingsholm.

Our scrum half Elton Moncrieff dropped a goal to win the match but only after the ball had ricocheted off the back of a Llanelli player before passing over the bar! We then defeated Cardiff 21-15 but lost a semi final to Leicester at Vicarage Road in controversial circumstances!

As previously stated it is the mercurial James Simpson-Daniel who heads the try scoring chart in our European ventures with 35 tries. No other player can match or come near to that figure. James Forrester with 16 and Terry Fanolua with fourteen are his nearest challengers. Of course both players have now departed the club.

As a club we have managed 365 tries with no fewer than 93 players recording those tries. The total is inclusive of ten penalty tries.

Joining James Forrester as the highest scoring forward is our former captain Jake Boer with 13 tries trailing James by three tries. They are the only forwards to reach double figures.

Tom Beim recorded five tries versus Roma here at Kingsholm on 14th October 2000 in a Heineken Cup encounter. This feat was matched by Daren O'Leary in a European Shield match against Gran Parma on the 5th January 2002.

Mark Mapletoft with four tries against Ebbw Vale on 12th October 1996 had his total of tries matched when James Simpson-Daniel scored 4 tries against Bucharest also at Kingsholm on 29th October 2005. There must be a factor in October at Kingsholm!

When Tim Taylor scored his 73rd minute try against Rovigo last Saturday he became the 93rd player to score a try for Gloucester in European Cup competition.

In the course of our 93 European Cup Competition matches we have accumulated a total of 3018 points and conceded 1820.

At Kingsholm we have scored 1,716 points and conceded 679. In away fixtures we have recorded 1302 points and conceded 1,141.

We have recorded 90 plus points on four occasions – 98 versus Caerphilly on 27th October 2001, 99 against Gran Parma on 5th January 2002, 106 versus Bucharest on 27th October 2005 and 90 against Rovigo on 16th October 2010.

The only match where we have failed to register a point came on 16 January 2004 against the French club, Stade Francais in a 27 point reverse.

Ironically, in the 2002-2003 season, three clubs visited Kingsholm in the Heineken Cup and all three registered sixteen points! They were Munster, Perpignan and Viadana. All three were defeated.

Jango is our second top try scorer in European competitions



GL13AX Gloucester Talk with Peter Arnold

VERY SATISFACTORY

I must admit to being very satisfied with the result of the Exeter game. I will amend that. I was satisfied with both the result and the manner of it.

It's always good to score five tries, but when four of them are either scored or made by the back three, it means that things are clicking just when you want them to.

James Simpson Daniel had a blinder of course. We've known for a long time what he is capable of, and the other week he demonstrated all his uncanny skills for everyone to see. But he's still not in the England squad.

There was always the problem of illness and injury of course, but I would have thought that that had been put to bed by now. My own feeling is that the hierarchy just doesn't know what to do with him.

You only get one Sinbad in a generation – Australia's David Campese was the last one - and a guy like that simply doesn't fit into any national training schedule.

You can't really coach a Simpson



Daniel, and by letting his instincts and his undoubted skills run wild and free during an international match, you're going to disrupt any carefully regimented game plan.

It's different when such a genius is playing for his club. There, the coaches have him under their eyes

for five days a week all through the season, and can learn how to take advantage of him in the scheme of things. The international system doesn't allow for that.

Personally, I'm glad of that. The more we see of Sinbad at Kingsholm, the better.

OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN

So what are we to make of Exeter Chiefs? In some ways, they're a bad team to play, because you're not going to get any credit for beating them. Only to be expected, the pundits will opine, but on the other hand, it would be fatally easy to slip up against them.

If you were being critical, you

could say that none of Exeter's three tries they scored the other week should have happened, because they all came from our own laxness. But the fact is that they did, and that's the point. They never give up, and will hurt you if you give them the chance.

There doesn't seem much chance that Exeter will be one season wonders. At least, I don't recall

any side who, having recorded five Premiership wins at this point in the season, have been relegated in the final shake up. At the time of the Kingsholm match, that was as many wins as Bath.

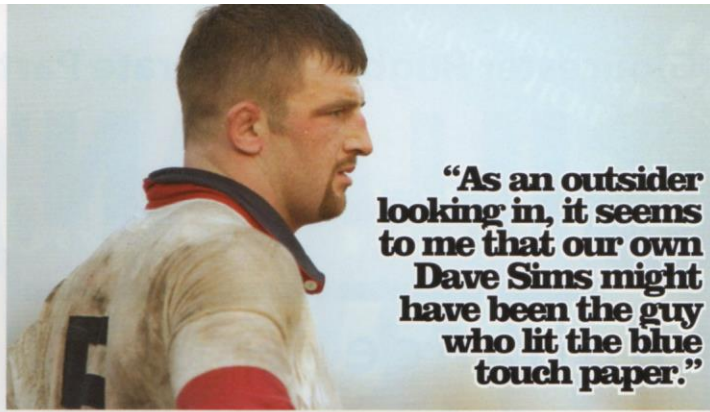
I'm pleased about that, because ever since they inflicted that disastrous and totally unexpected defeat on us on day one they've surprised a fair few people, and

there may well be more to come.

It was good to see Mark Foster and Haydn Thomas back at Kingsholm. I'm sure that their influence, along with that of other players with Premiership experience, has been a highly influential factor in their initial success.

So where did it all start? As an outsider looking in, it seems to me that our own Dave Sims might have been the guy who lit the blue touch paper.

It could be that it was Dave's tenure as the Exeter Chiefs' coach was the period in which they started the long climb up into the Premiership. Many of us recall what a charismatic and influential figure



"As an outsider looking in, it seems to me that our own Dave Sims might have been the guy who lit the blue touch paper."

he was at Kingsholm, and having his own side to run would have been right up his street.

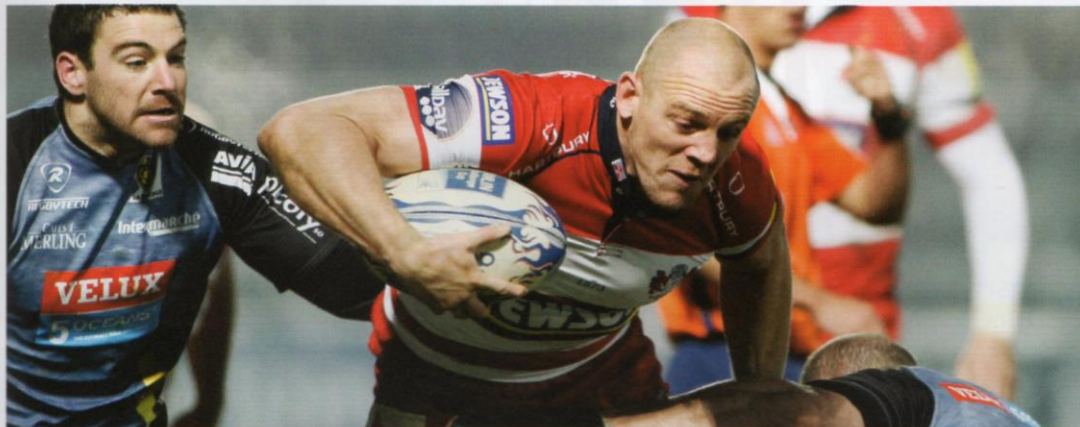
"Simmo" left Gloucester under rancorous circumstances, of course, and I'll bet he had a wry and slightly malicious chuckle to himself when

we lost that first game.

I don't know where he is now, or what he's doing, but I'm sure that everyone who remembers him will wish him well.

Along with the team he helped to build.

WHERE'S STEPHEN HAWKING WHEN WE NEED HIM?



There's no denying that today's game is important, but just how important is another matter. All right, if we lose the Amlin is all over for us.

It's the implications of a victory which make the brain hurt. It's most unlikely that we shall make the quarters as of right, but we could just sneak into the 'best losers' category.

That's all very well, but the permutations and combinations presented by the possible results this weekend are labyrinthine to say the least. I'm not even going to try to work them out. Where's Stephen Hawking when we need him?

The galling thing is that it's all so

unnecessary. We could easily have been riding high in our group, and the fact that we aren't is largely our own fault.

With all due respect to tonight's welcome visitors, we should have won down on the Bay of Biscay. To be honest, we had them on toast in that game until we imploded, largely thanks to a couple of yellow cards by senior players, which Bryan Redpath described as "dumb".

Then there was the La Rochelle game at Kingsholm. It was an odd affair all round, played in blisteringly cold conditions and on the weekend when we were trying to come to terms with the sad

death of Tom Walkinshaw.

On top of that, it was an ugly, fractious affair which bestowed little credit of either side.

Whether the strange atmosphere had anything to do with it, I don't know. But Gloucester never came to the party that evening.

Even so, when, on two occasions, La Rochelle were down to thirteen men, we should have been able to break their defence, determined though it was. But we weren't and it's all water under the bridge.

Since then, we've had a couple of good wins, albeit against lesser opposition than we face this evening.

We shall see what we shall see.



LEEDS CARNEGIE 15
 GLOUCESTER RUGBY 13

Gloucester's away day woes continued as they slipped to a narrow and frustrating 15-13 defeat to Leeds Carnegie at Headingley.

It was a disappointing start to the New Year for Bryan Redpath's side on a slightly surreal day in Leeds. The game kicked off with Headingley probably more than three quarters empty. But, with the Leeds Rhinos entertaining Wakefield immediately after the Gloucester game, the second half crowd swelled to more than 12,000.

Headingley, of course, has been the scene of one of Gloucester's wins on the road last season when Leeds were finally worn down as Gloucester came



TRY 13min Fourie (5-0)
CON 14min Thomas (7-0)

TRY 24min Simpson-Daniel (7-5)
CON 24min Burns (7-7)
PEN 29min Thomas (10-7)

PEN 36min Burns (10-10)

2 | 4 | 6 | 8 | 10 | 12 | 14 | 16 | 18 | 20 | 22 | 24 | 26 | 28 | 30 | 32 | 34 | 36 | 38 | 40

KEY MOMENT

TRY 69min Stephenson (15-13)

Having trailed for much of the game, Freddie Burns had just nudged Gloucester into a second half lead when Michael Stephenson scrambled his way to the line for the go ahead score. There was a suggestion of Stephenson losing the ball before grounding but the officials saw nothing wrong so the try stood and Gloucester couldn't get back on terms.

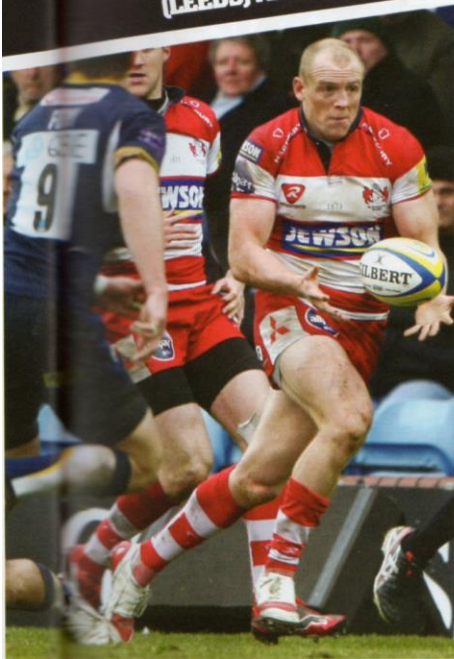
from behind to secure a 26-10 victory.

And this encounter looked to be following a similar pattern when Leeds' England flanker, Hendre Fourie, pounced for a close range try after Gloucester coughed up possession in a key area.

A splendid backs move produced a try for James Simpson-Daniel that led to the travelling Gloucester support hoping that it was all about to click into place.

However, as befits a team scrapping for their very Premiership existence, Leeds continued to fight tooth and nail and, in effect, dragged Gloucester into an arm wrestle.

"SOME OF OUR BASICS WEREN'T GOOD ENOUGH - OUR CATCHING OF BALLS, RUNNING INTO TOUCH, CONTROL AND THE CONTACT. I HIGHLIGHTED IT, I TALKED ABOUT IT PRIOR TO THE GAME. THEY (LEEDS) ARE FIGHTING FOR THEIR LIVELIHOODS."



In pragmatic fashion, Gloucester sought to try and take a decisive grip of the game following the break but the only reward for their efforts was a Freddie Burns penalty which made the score 10-13.

It was insufficient reward for the amount of territory but, time and again, a forward pass or a knock on brought a promising move to a close.

As each minute passed, you could sense Leeds' self belief growing and Michael Stephenson's try on the hour mark was just the shot in the arm they needed.

Trailing only by two points, Gloucester didn't look like getting the penalty or drop goal they needed to snatch the lead as the home side defended like demons and duly clinched their first Premiership win of the season.

Defeat was a bitter pill to swallow and the long coach trip home provided plenty of time for contemplation.

THE LINE UPS

LEEDS CARNEGIE

15. Ceiron Thomas
14. Lee Blackett
13. Henry Fa'afili
12. Scott Barrow
11. Michael Stephenson
10. Lachie Mackay
9. Warren Fury
1. Gareth Hardy
2. Steve Thompson
3. Phil Swainston
4. Tom Denton
5. Marco Wentzel (C)
6. Rhys Oakley
7. Hendre Fourie
8. Daniel Browne

16. Phil Nilsen
17. Mike MacDonald
18. Gareth Denman
19. Kearnan Myall
20. Danny Paul
21. Scott Mathie
22. Luther Burrell
23. Leigh Hinton

GLOUCESTER RUGBY

15. Olly Morgan
14. James Simpson-Daniel
13. Mike Tindall (C)
12. Eliota Fuimaono-Sapolu
11. Lesley Vainikolo
10. Freddie Burns
9. Rory Lawson
1. Nick Wood
2. Scott Lawson
3. Pierre Capdevielle
4. Will James
5. Alex Brown
6. Peter Buxton
7. Andrew Hazell
8. Luke Narraway

16. Olivier Azam
17. Yann Thomas
18. Rupert Harden
19. Alasdair Strokosch
20. Akapusi Qera
21. Dave Lewis
22. Nicky Robinson
23. Charlie Sharples

PEN 54min Burns (10-13)

TRY 69min Stephenson (15-13)

42 | 44 | 46 | 48 | 50 | 52 | 54 | 56 | 58 | 60 | 62 | 64 | 66 | 68 | 70 | 72 | 74 | 76 | 78 | 80

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Interview first featured on and courtesy of rfu.com

Ryan Mills

ROAD TO RECOVERY

IT was a tough few months for Gloucester Rugby's 18 year old centre Ryan Mills. After suffering a horrendous ankle injury during training back in October, the England Under 20 star is now well on the road to recovery and back in the England set up.

Mills has fought his way back to fitness and played a part in the club's last couple of Aviva Premiership outings and was happy to still be in the thoughts of the England age group coaches although he couldn't play a full part in training.

As England prepared an Under 19 Academies side to face Ireland in Dublin recently, Mills admitted he was desperate to pull on the England shirt once more.

A regular for the England U18 side last season, Mills enjoyed a good preseason with the Gloucester Rugby first team squad, featuring at full back in a friendly with the Scarlets



GLOUCESTER
RUGBY.CO.UK

but then injured an ankle in a freak training pitch accident.

"I went over on my ankle and had grade three ruptures on two of the ligaments, so I basically needed my whole ankle reconstructed

The 18 year old, equally at home at fly half or centre, has certainly made the most of his enforced absence from the game, using the time wisely to work on his weaker areas.

"It actually feels a bit stronger now than it did before to be honest. I've been working hard at building the muscle back up as well as concentrating on building up other weaker muscles such as my hamstrings and glutes.

"It's important to take positives out

"IT'S EXCITING TO HAVE SO MANY GOOD PLAYERS IN AND AROUND THE SQUAD AT THE MOMENT. YOU DON'T HAVE TO RELY ON YOURSELF, YOU RELY ON YOUR TEAMMATES TO BACK YOU UP..."

of your injuries and hopefully I've come back a fitter player."

The England U20 squad recently enjoyed a week long training camp in sunny Portugal, and while full contact rugby was out of the equation for Mills, the opportunity to mix it with the rest of Rob Hunter's squad was reward enough.

"I enjoyed a good week over in Portugal with the rest of the U20 lads. I wasn't able to participate



too much in the rugby as a precaution but I was chomping at the bit. Saying that, it was a good opportunity to build my fitness up and spend some time in the gym while doing my rehab.

"It's exciting to have so many good players in and around the squad at the moment. You don't have to rely on yourself, you rely on your teammates to back you up and that's a huge asset of the current U20 squad – it's full of team players."

It's not just at international level where Mills is surrounded by talent, back at Gloucester he has England Senior centre Mike Tindall for company, someone he admires hugely.

"He's a huge role model and has given me different bits of advice, which I have massive respect for. Everything he does is professional and for me personally, I'd love to achieve what he has done for both club and country."

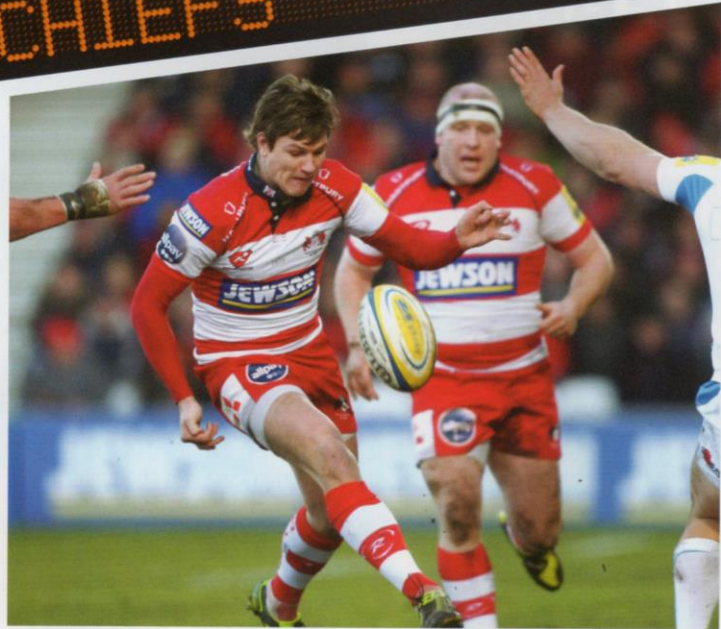


GLOUCESTER RUGBY	37
EXETER CHIEFS	23

Gloucester bounced back from the disappointment of seven days earlier with a much improved performance in a 37-23 defeat of the Exeter Chiefs at Kingsholm.

The win saw Gloucester chalk up their first try scoring bonus point of the season and move back into the vital Heineken Cup qualification places with a couple of games in hand on their nearest rivals.

Post match, Head Coach Bryan Redpath denied that the opening day defeat at Sandy Park had been a motivating factor for his side but the display was one of Gloucester's most intense of the season.



PEN 4min Steenson (0-3)	TRY 17min R. Lawson (8-3)	TRY 26min Morgan (13-3)	PEN 39min Burns (18-6)
PEN 7min Burns (3-3)		CON 26min Burns (15-3)	YC 39min Thomas (Exeter)
		PEN 29min Steenson (15-6)	

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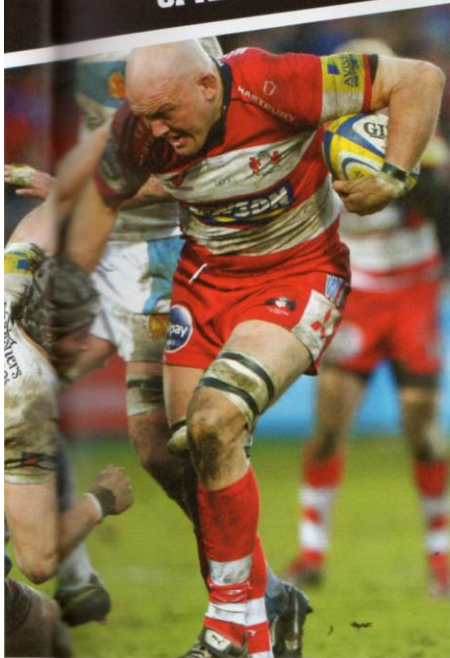
KEY MOMENT



TRY 26min Morgan (13-3)

With the game poised at 8-3, Exeter were pushing hard to get back on terms when Haydn Thomas was penalised for holding on near the Gloucester line. Eliota Fuimaono-Sapolu took a quick tap and, a few swift passes later, Olly Morgan touched down at the Exeter end.

"WE STRUCK WELL, WE HIT THE PHASES WELL AND WE CAME ON TO THE BALL AND WE WEREN'T PASSIVE AS WE WERE TOO OFTEN AT LEEDS."



From one to fifteen, each and every man played his part with Exeter well and truly matched in the physicality stakes, something not every Aviva Premiership side has been able to achieve this season.

Credit to the Chiefs. They play with a passion and a team spirit that few can match. On several occasions, lesser teams would have thrown in the towel but they kept on coming at Gloucester and were rewarded with three second half tries.

However, Gloucester had too much in the tank and are now nicely poised for the second half of the Aviva Premiership season.

The opening stages were tight and hard fought and the visitors employed a sensible game plan, remaining patient and keeping possession away from Gloucester.

In fact, they were probably edging the territory stakes until Gloucester struck for two excellent long range tries to take a handy 18-6 lead into half time.

When Simpson-Daniel added a third for Gloucester, things looked grim for the Chiefs but they hit back immediately with a slightly fortuitous score for flanker Tom Johnson.

Charlie Sharples clinched the try scoring bonus point on 63 minutes to seemingly end the game as a contest but Naqelevuiki immediately responded.

Qera added a fifth as the Chiefs chased the game and over ambitious handling let them down near their own line only for Naqelevuiki, once again, to restore pride with the final play of the game to bring an entertaining encounter to an end.

THE LINE UPS

GLOUCESTER RUGBY

15. Olly Morgan
14. Charlie Sharples
13. Mike Tindall (C)
12. Eliota Fuimaono-Sapolu
11. James Simpson-Daniel
10. Freddie Burns
9. Rory Lawson
1. Nick Wood
2. Scott Lawson
3. Paul Doran-Jones
4. Will James
5. Alex Brown
6. Peter Buxton
7. Andrew Hazell
8. Luke Narraway
16. Olivier Azam
17. Pierre Capdevielle
18. Rupert Harden
19. Alasdair Strokosch
20. Akapusi Qera
21. Dave Lewis
22. Tim Taylor
23. Henry Trinder

EXETER CHIEFS

15. Luke Arscott
14. Mark Foster
13. Jason Shoemark
12. Sireli Naqelevuiki
11. Nic Sestaret
10. Gareth Steenson
9. Haydn Thomas
1. Brett Sturges
2. Chris Whitehead
3. Hoani Tui
4. Tom Hayes (C)
5. James Hanks
6. Tom Johnson
7. James Scaysbrook
8. Richard Baxter
16. Simon Alcott
17. Ben Moon
18. Chris Budgen
19. Chad Slade
20. Dave Ewers
21. Junior Poluleuligaga
22. Ryan Davis
23. Phil Dollman

TRY 50min Simpson-Daniel (23-6)
CON 50min Burns (25-6)

TRY 58min Johnson (25-11)

TRY 63min Sharples (30-11)
TRY 65min Naqelevuiki (30-16)
CON 65min Steenson (30-18)

TRY 77min Qera (35-18)
CON 77min Taylor (37-18)
TRY 80min Naqelevuiki (37-23)

42 | 44 | 46 | 48 | 50 | 52 | 54 | 56 | 58 | 60 | 62 | 64 | 66 | 68 | 70 | 72 | 74 | 76 | 78 | 80

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TODAY'S LINE-UPS

GLOUCESTER RUGBY

- 15** T OLLY MORGAN
FULLBACK
- 14** JJ JAMES SIMPSON-DANIEL
WING
- 13** TT TRINDER
MIKE TINDALL (C)
CENTRE
- 12** 17-0 ELIOTA FUIMAONO-SAPOLU
CENTRE
- 11** T TOM VOYCE
WING
- 10** 27-0 CPTC PCCC
34-0 FREDDIE BURNS
FLY-HALF
- 9** 41-0 RORY LAWSON
SCRUM-HALF
- 1** 4-7 NICK WOOD
PROP
- 2** 28-7 SCOTT LAWSON
HOOKER
- 3** 53-7 PAUL DORAN-JONES
PROP
- 4** 60-7 WILL JAMES
LOCK
- 5** ALEX BROWN
LOCK
- 6** PETER BUXTON
FLANKER
- 7** AKAPUSI QERA
FLANKER
- 8** T LUKE NARRAWAY
NO.8
- OLIVIER AZAM **16**
YANN THOMAS **17**
PIERRE CAPDEVIELLE **18**
ALASDAIR STROKOSCH **19**
ANDREW HAZELL **20**
DAVE LEWIS **21**
TIM TAYLOR **22** cc
HENRY TRINDER **23**

SU AGEN

- 15** FLORENT CAZEAX
FULLBACK
- 14** SAIMONI VAKA
WING
- 13** BENJAMIN PETRE
CENTRE
- 12** JAMIE ROBINSON
CENTRE
- 11** RATU KOLINISAU
WING
- 10** JUNIOR PELESASA
FLY-HALF
- 9** ALEXI BALES
SCRUM-HALF
- 1** KARIM KOUIDER
PROP
- 2** BRICE MACH
HOOKER
- 3** MOSESE MOALA
PROP
- 4** THIBAUT LASSALLE
LOCK
- 5** DAMIEN LAGRANGE
LOCK
- 6** HENDRO SCHOLTZ T
FLANKER
- 7** CYRIL CHAVET (C)
FLANKER
- 8** JEROME MONDOULET
NO.8
- 16** JALIL NARJISSI
17 SEMISI TELEFONI ?
18 BEKA SHEKLASHVILI
19 ANDREW SPRINGGAY
20 LISIATE FA'AOSO
21 SYLVAIN DUPUY
22 CONRAD BARNARD cc
23 MIGUEL AVRAMOVIC

MATCH SCORE

GLOUCESTER RUGBY
v
SU AGEN



REFEREE: Peter Allan (SRU)
ASST REFEREES:
Iain Heard and Rob Dickson



THE STATS THAT MATTER

POOL 1

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Diff	B	Pts
Harlequins	5	4	0	1	150	67	83	3	19
Bayonne	5	3	0	2	146	77	69	2	14
Connacht	5	2	0	3	90	92	-2	2	10
Cavalieri Prato	5	1	0	4	70	220-150	0	4	

POOL 2

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Diff	B	Pts
Brive	5	5	0	0	233	34	199	3	23
Sale Sharks	5	3	0	2	229	53	176	4	16
Petrarca	5	1	0	4	68	189-121	1	5	
El Salvador	5	1	0	4	64	318-254	0	4	

POOL 3

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Diff	B	Pts
Montpellier	5	4	0	1	115	71	44	1	17
Exeter	5	3	0	2	124	81	43	3	15
Newcastle Falcons	5	2	0	3	66	114-48	1	9	
Bourgoin	5	1	0	4	91	130-39	2	6	

POOL 4

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Diff	B	Pts
Stade Francais	5	5	0	0	182	56	126	4	24
Leeds Carnegie	5	3	0	2	145	82	63	2	14
Bucuresti	5	1	0	4	68	122-54	1	5	
Crociati Rugby	5	1	0	4	53	188-135	1	5	

POOL 5

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Diff	B	Pts
La Rochelle	5	4	0	1	126	74	52	3	19
Gloucester	5	3	0	2	195	70	125	4	16
Agen	5	3	0	2	160	98	62	3	15
Rovigo	5	0	0	5	38	277-239	0	0	

Amlin Challenge Cup

Amlin

FedEx

adidas

EDF

Amlin
Challenge
Cup

ERC