



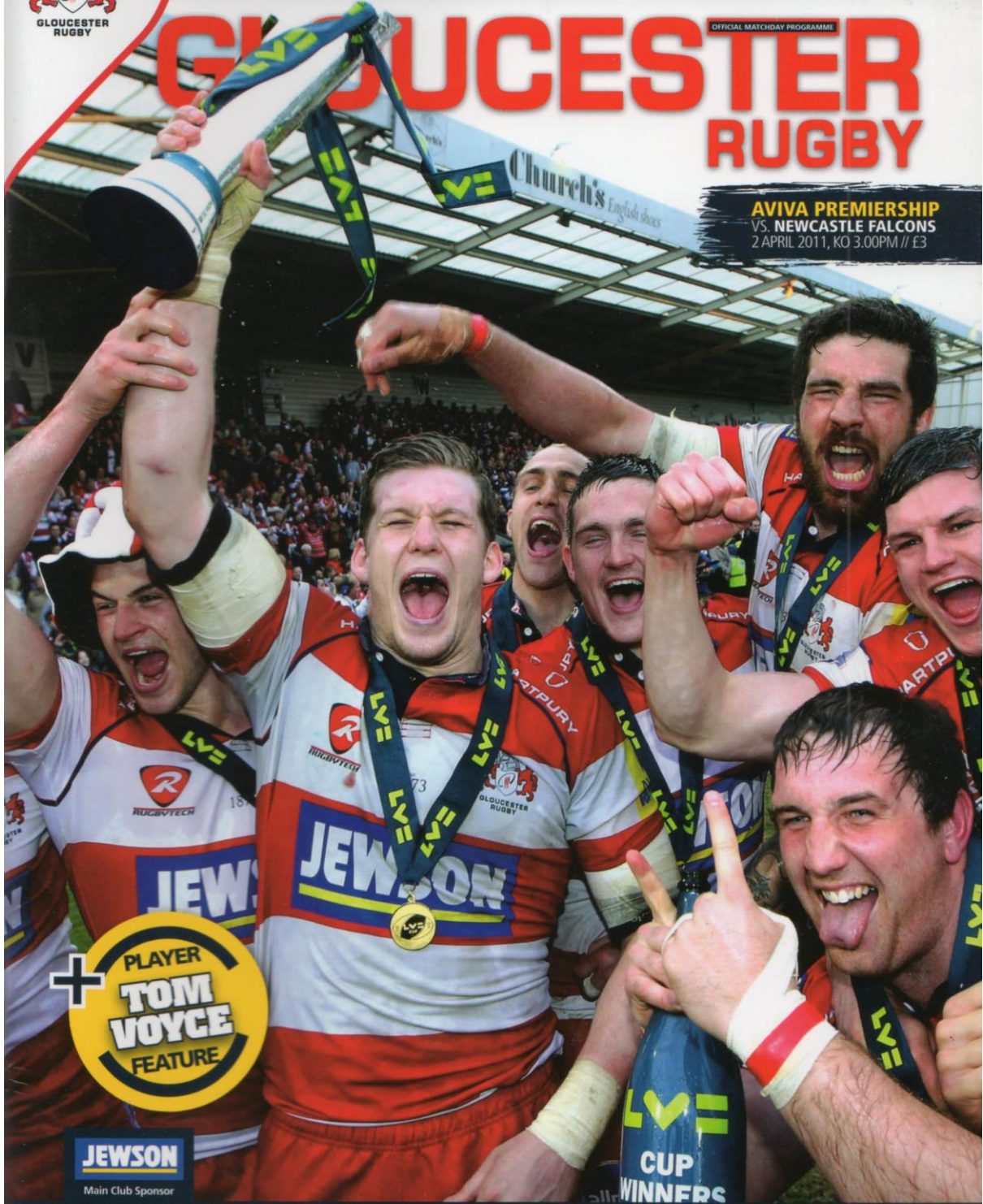
LV= CUP WINNERS 2010/11



GLoucester RUGBY

OFFICIAL MATCHDAY PROGRAMME

AVIVA PREMIERSHIP
VS. NEWCASTLE FALCONS
2 APRIL 2011, KO 3.00PM // £3



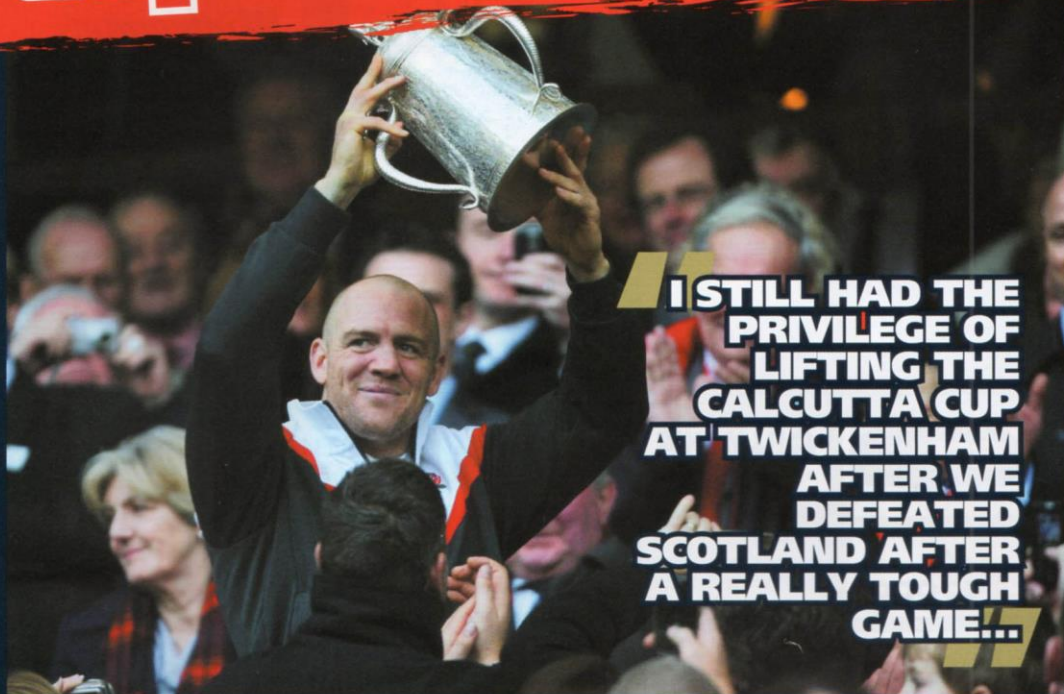
+ PLAYER
TOM VOYCE
FEATURE

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MIKE TINDALL

Captain's Corner



I STILL HAD THE PRIVILEGE OF LIFTING THE CALCUTTA CUP AT TWICKENHAM AFTER WE DEFEATED SCOTLAND AFTER A REALLY TOUGH GAME...

Sometimes writing these programme notes can be easy, sometimes it can be quite tricky!

This time, however, I'm really happy to be writing this column only a week or so after Gloucester Rugby lifted the LV= Cup.

Apologies to our visitors from Newcastle today, the last thing they need today is to be reminded of the game at Franklin's Gardens. It's just one of the quirks of the fixture calendar that they're the visitors today and I'm sure they'll forgive us for dwelling on it for a moment.

I've been at Gloucester for a few years now and I've obviously tasted my fair share of disappointment when it comes to losing finals etc.

So, even though I couldn't play any part in the final, there was no-one happier or prouder than myself to see Naz lift the trophy and the rest of the boys celebrating on the podium.

You can talk about the prize money and the automatic

qualification for the Heineken Cup but I can guarantee you that those things wouldn't have entered their thinking at that point.

Everyone connected with Gloucester would simply have been overjoyed to lift that piece of silverware. It was richly deserved.

From a personal point of view, it's obviously been a tricky couple of weeks. I've always been incredibly proud to represent my country and I've had the added honour this spring of captaining the side during the RBS Six Nations.

It was an amazing experience and things seemed to be going so well and then, of course, I injured my ankle against Scotland.

I still had the privilege of lifting the Calcutta Cup at Twickenham after we defeated Scotland after a really tough game but, as the preparations continued for the Grand Slam game in Dublin, it became apparent that my ankle wasn't going to allow me

to play my part.

That was frustrating enough in itself but some of that disappointment would have tempered had we gone on to clinch the Grand Slam. However, Ireland denied us with a superb display and all I could do on the day was watch.

Being injured is one of the occupational hazards of being a rugby player and, following last week's operations, I'm now looking at a spell of rehab.

That's not going to prevent me from trying to do my bit to support the Gloucester lads in the final few weeks of the season.

Last weekend at Harlequins was disappointing but hopefully just a blip.

Being back at Kingsholm today is just what we need and, all being well, we'll rediscover the form that took us to 11 wins on the bounce before last Saturday.

Enjoy the game.

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**WHAT'S
IMPORTANT
NOW IS HOW WE
RESPOND. THE
WINNING RUN
WAS ALWAYS
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AND WE HAVE
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STARTING
TODAY WITH
NEWCASTLE.**

**BRYAN
REDPATH
EXCLUSIVE COACH'S NOTES**

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

How does the popular saying go? A week's a long time in politics? Well, you could certainly apply that to professional rugby union as well.

In the space of a few short days, we've gone from the highs of the LV= Cup win to suffering our worst defeat of the season and, possibly the worst in my time at the club, last weekend at Harlequins.

Focussing on the positives, we enjoyed a tremendous couple of weekends in the LV= Cup. The sun shone on our semi final against the Dragons here at Kingsholm and it turned out to be a memorable day.

Bearing in mind that the match was televised and that it was an all pay fixture, it was a great to see so many people in the ground backing us and it gave us a huge boost.

It may sound as though I'm being hyper critical following a win when we scored 45 points but there were still elements of our performance where we needed to improve against the Dragons.

We got off to a great start and scored two early tries but then lost our way a little and had to withstand quite a bit of pressure. The Dragons did ask some serious questions of us and the bounce of the ball was definitely in our favour.

Nicky Robinson's interception on the half hour steadied the ship a bit and we killed the game off in the second half before we made a few changes and conceded a couple of late scores.

That of course sent us into the final against today's opponents and gave us a chance to banish some

of the negative memories of two consecutive defeats in the final of the Anglo Welsh competition.

Again, I have to pay tribute to the Gloucester support. The stadium may not have been full but the crowd was completely dominated by supporters wearing the Cherry and White of Gloucester.

There are two things you can say about our supporters – they wear the colours with pride and they make a lot of noise! That was massive for the boys, it was like a home game for us and obviously gave us an advantage.

Again, we got off to a good start



but it was hard going after that and Newcastle deserve a lot of credit for that. They made life difficult for us and things could have been closer had Jimmy Gopperth not missed a couple of penalties, something we can't count on today.

It's been replayed countless times on television since but Eliota's try really was the game breaker and we were able to breathe a bit more easily after that before the celebrations began in earnest.

It was tough for Newcastle but we know exactly how they felt. Standing by and watching while someone else lifts the trophy is a painful experience and I'm sure they will use it to spur them on in the future as we have.

However, we came back down to earth big time last weekend against Harlequins as anyone who travelled to the game or watched it on TV would have seen.

I did say when I did my media during the week that it was going to be a tough fixture for us but there was no hint as to what was to follow.

However, plain and simply, we were never in the game at the Stoop. Even when the score line was reasonably close at 10-3, we were second best.

We hadn't lost a game by more than 12 points all season and had only failed to take a point, even a losing bonus point, from one match – against Exeter Chiefs on the opening day.

However, we lacked energy, missed

tackles, didn't look after the ball and, fair play to Quins, they well and truly took advantage.

You only have to be 5% off your game to get well beaten in the Aviva Premiership and some of the other results last weekend backed that up.

What's important now is how we respond. The winning run was always going to come to an end at some point. It's behind us now and we have to regroup, starting today with Newcastle.

It won't be easy today. Newcastle will still be smarting after the defeat up in Northampton and they did beat us at Kingston Park earlier in the season.

We still have lots to play for and we need to bounce back. Hopefully, we'll do so today.

Enjoy the game!

View from The Citizen

with Nick Purewal

this is gloucestershire.co.uk



Narraway: Regroup and refocus

"Hard work, back to basics, having a bit of edge about us in training, and then having a lot of edge about us against Newcastle."

Embarrassed Luke Narraway has vowed Gloucester will never repeat their lacklustre Harlequins effort.

The frustrated Gloucester skipper admitted the Cherry and Whites felt humiliated by their 53-15 hammering at The Stoop.

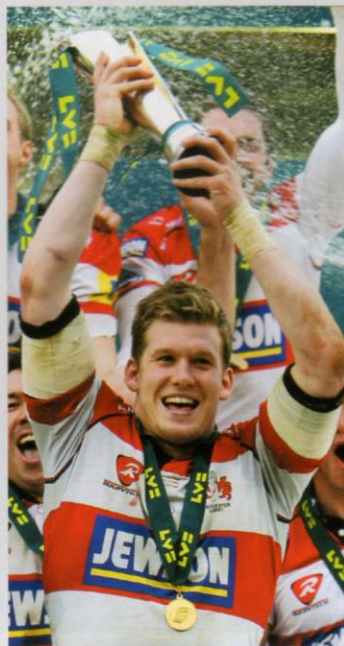
Gloucester regrouped and refocused after their New Year's Day defeat at Leeds – and now Narraway said they must do the same again.

Refusing to accept the standards of Sunday's seven-try shaming, the 27-year-old said only hard work and honest criticism will spur Gloucester back to recent, and craved, heights.

Allied to pride, Gloucester conceded their 11-match winning run on Saturday.

Their two games in hand still leave the Cherry and Whites in a strong league footing – but Bryan Redpath's men would clearly rather have points in the bag.

Gloucester host Newcastle at Kingsholm on Saturday (kick-off 3pm), a vastly different challenge despite easing past the Falcons 34-7 in the LV=Cup final.



"We strive together as a squad, as a coaching staff to be out there and be competitive."

Worcester born Narraway explained: "We'll get down to hard work, train hard, and make sure we never see this kind of performance again for the rest of the season.

"It wasn't up to scratch, it's not just me, not just 15 players it's the whole squad.

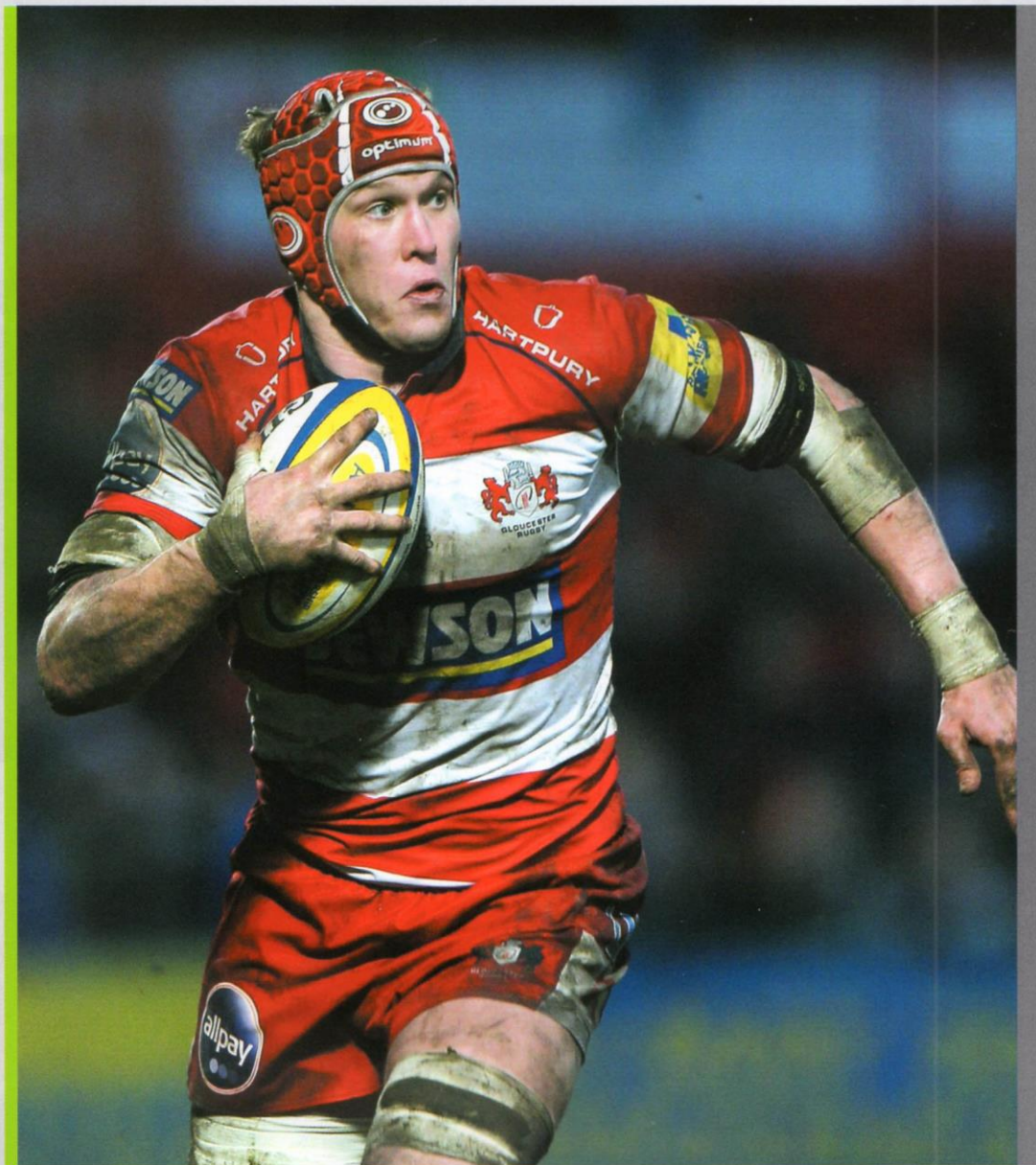
"We strive together as a squad, as a coaching staff to be out there and be competitive.

"Coming away is always hard but if you make that many mistakes and play in their half too long against a side that obviously had it up them, you're going to come off second best.

"We never steadied the ship, they got ahead and instead of steadying the ship we played into their hands.

"I'm personally responsible for the scrum and the score they had off that, it was not good enough.

"So it's frustration, disappointment and embarrassment, all the feelings are there, but we'll take our medicine, we'll watch the game – but we won't forget about it because there's a lot of lessons to learn."



Ready to overturn Gloucester's mindset and method if necessary, Narraway said one defeat does not a bad side make – provided the Cherry and Whites get things back together without delay.

Consistency is not about breaking club records, more isolating defeats and ensuring a winning trend overarches the majority of fixtures.

Defeat can be accepted, but not in Saturday's manner.

Narraway continued: "We're still the side that played last week, played for the previous 11 weeks on the trot, it's not panic buttons by any sense of the word.

"But we ironed out a few things within the squad months and months ago, and they crept into the game today.

"And maybe we need to revisit that.

"It was just disappointing,

embarrassing and I feel we let down everyone who travelled to support us.

"Hard work, back to basics, having a bit of edge about us in training, and then having a lot of edge about us against Newcastle.

"There's a lot of questions being asked after Sunday, and rightly so: we've got to learn the lessons and make sure we come out and answer those questions this week."

If one man symbolises Gloucester's incredible surge in form in the second half of the 2010-11 season, it's Tom Voyce.

Opportunities on the wing were frustratingly difficult to come by in the early part of the campaign with the likes of Charlie Sharples, James Simpson-Daniel and Lesley Vainikolo all seemingly scoring tries for fun.

Not that this bothered a man who boasts an impressive collection of winners medals from his time at his previous club, London Wasps. He's been around long enough to know that his chance would come and what was important was making the most of it.

However, even he has been pleasantly surprised by the way that Gloucester's season has taken off in 2011.

"It's been brilliant. I think we've always had the potential, Brushy and Hoggy have always created a framework for us to perform, it was just a case of us players utilising that framework."

"For the likes of myself, Will James and Tim Molenaar there's been a real opportunity to come in during the international period which creates a bit of competition in the squad and ups everybody's game."

"Before the Bath game, Brush said, quite rightly, that he could have picked every single player in the room at that team meeting. That creates selection problems for him but what a great situation for the team when you have that many guys putting their hands up."

"The great thing is that we've kept our feet on the ground. Certain players have made sure we've done that, as have the coaches. The Dragons game was a good little hiccup for us because it made us look at our standards, question things like our defence and that helps us to maintain our focus."

The last time Gloucester faced today's opponents Newcastle was, of course, at Franklin's Gardens a fortnight ago in the final of the LV= Cup.

There's been a lot of debate about the competition in recent seasons - the format, the position in the playing calendar. However, it's a competition Gloucester have taken a liking to?

"It is slightly disappointing when you hear people describe it as a lesser cup but a trophy is a trophy at the end of the day and it's a medal around your neck."

"For me coming off that game, it was hugely important for us because it's taken away that hoodoo around finals. I know I haven't been here long enough to talk about what the other guys have gone through but we can now all say that we've done it, we've tasted success."

"Naz (Luke Narraway) said yesterday that we've won one trophy

"THINGS ARE GOING WELL ON THE PITCH BUT ENJOYING YOURSELF AWAY FROM THE GAME IS IMPORTANT AS IT GIVES YOU PERSPECTIVE."

and now he wants to win another. It felt great personally but I was so happy for people like Browner and Morgs and Hazey."

"And, if we find ourselves in contention again, we'll be a better team for it as we know that we're capable of winning trophies. It's important now that we push on."

With the business end of the Aviva Premiership season now upon us, the Truro born winger is under no illusions about how tough it's going to be for Gloucester to make the end of season play offs.

"It's going to be hard especially with those three games in a week but we have a squad where everyone wants to play and everyone is capable of playing a part."

"We can't look too far ahead and start thinking about which games we might win. It is all about one game at a time. Keeping our feet on the ground, taking each game as it comes, that's key."

"As is learning from our experiences. I've said a few times that winning away from home is vital as you don't win trophies at home. We've won a few now and people might start looking at us and considering us as contenders."

"That's what we want. I roomed with Charlie Sharples before the LV= Final and he told me he was nervous about us being favourites. My advice to him was that you should embrace it because we've earned it."

"Other teams will be preparing to face us and worrying about what we can do, that we've won a lot of games in a row, scoring tries for fun. That knocks your opponent and gives you a mental edge."

The name Voyce is writ large in Kingsholm folklore with great uncle and namesake Tom an integral part of the club's rich history. It's a legacy some might fight shy of but the Voyce of this era positively embraces it.

"It's massive. I came to Gloucester to bring something to the team and try and help us win trophies. And the family connection is very important to me, my great uncle was a big part of the club and my Dad used to stand in the Shed."

"I don't think I'll ever match what my great uncle did here but it means a lot to myself and to my family that I've helped Gloucester achieve something."

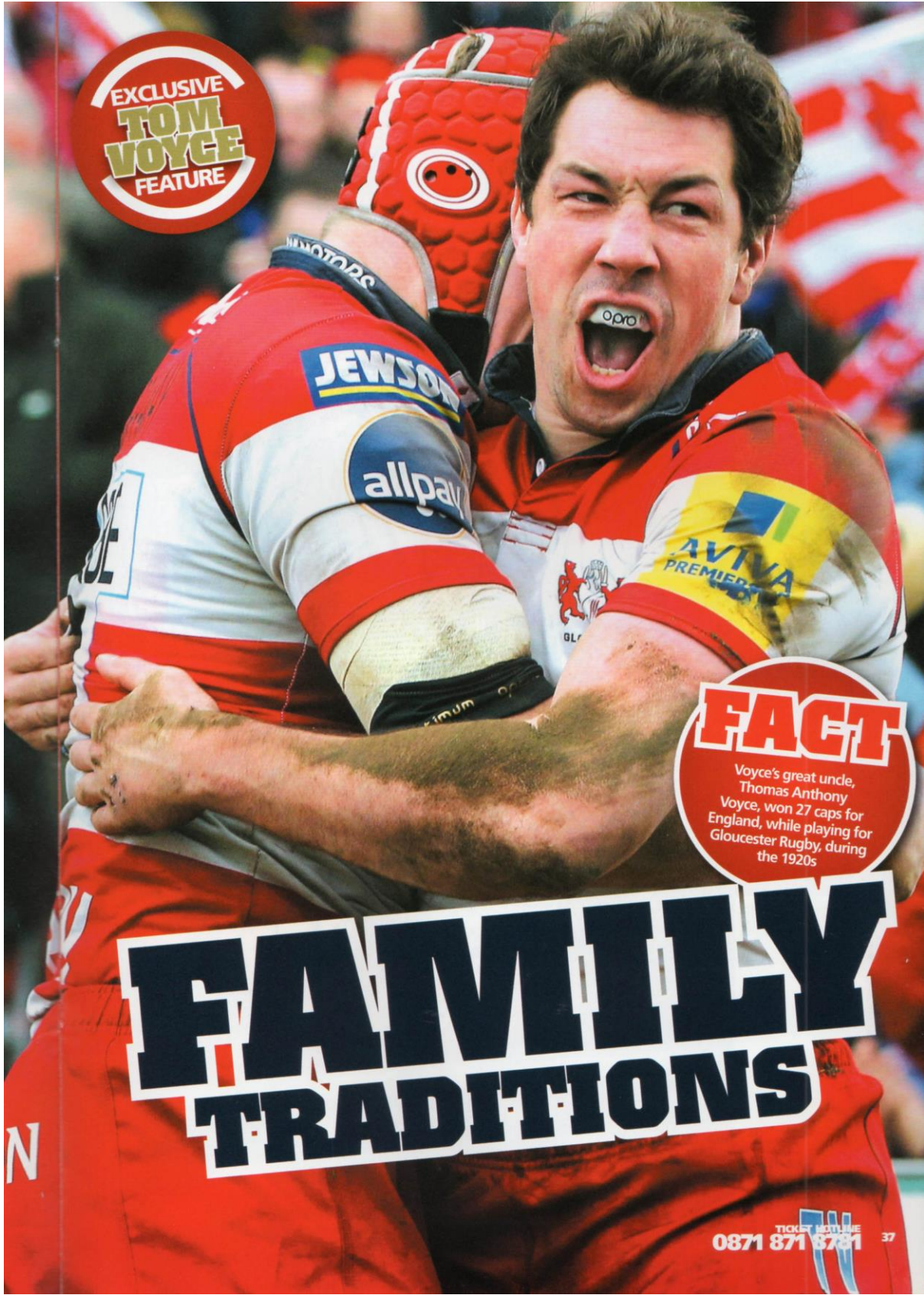
Finally, "lovin' life" is a phrase that's cropped up time and again amongst the squad, seemingly coined by Jim Hamilton. It seems to fit perfectly at the moment?

"It's great fun. There's a great togetherness amongst the boys at the moment. We were all out on the Sunday night after the final and it didn't matter if you were Jonny May or Jim Hamilton. Anyone can talk to anyone else and be part of it. There's no hierarchy or cliques."

"Loving life is probably the perfect description. Things are going well on the pitch but enjoying yourself away from the game is important as it gives you perspective."

"We train hard but we also need down time. It's a beautiful part of the world and I try and embrace that. At this time of the year, rugby's mental as much as physical and keeping fresh mentally by enjoying yourself away from the game will help your rugby."

EXCLUSIVE
TOM VOYCE
FEATURE

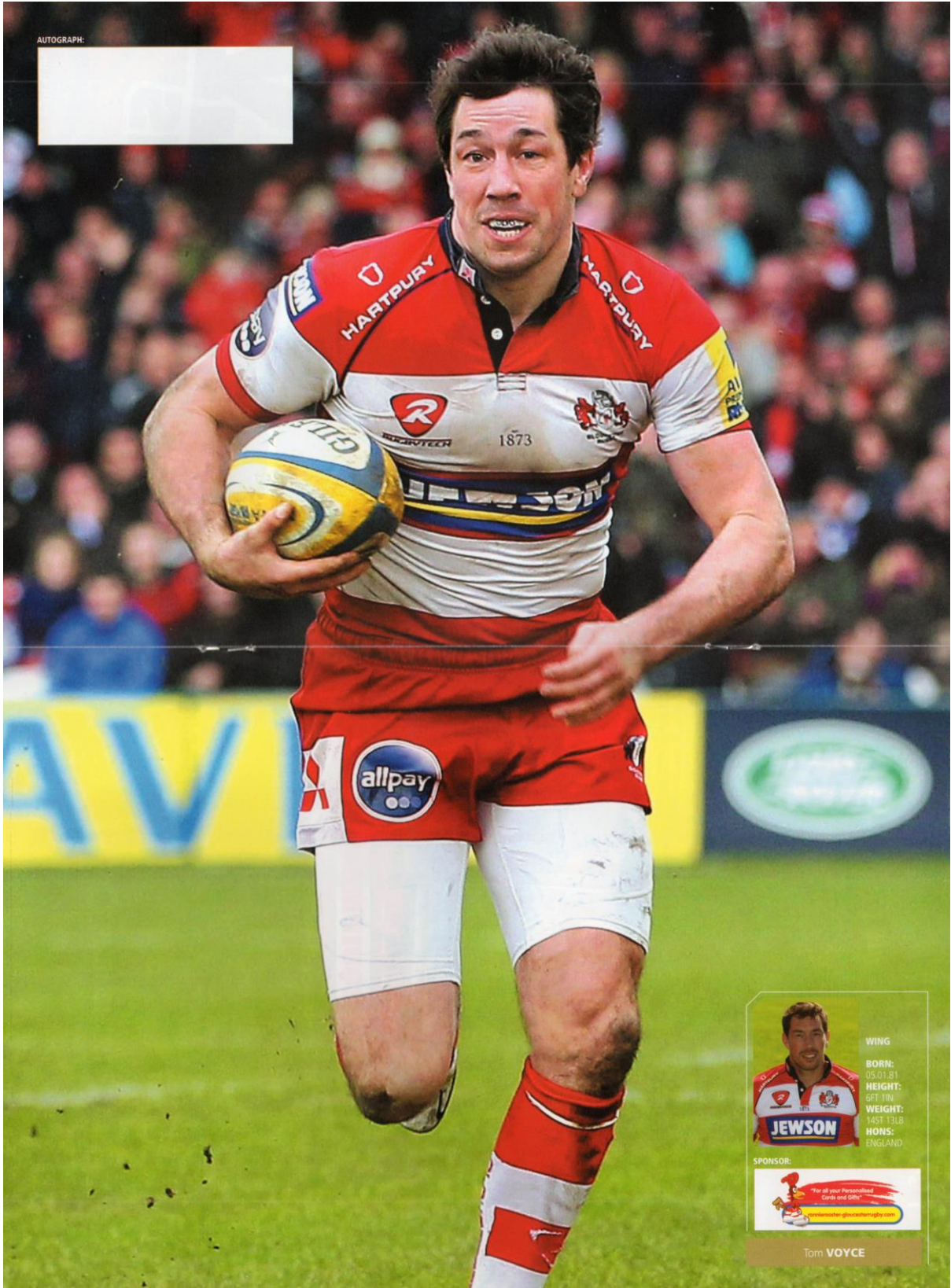


FACT
Joyce's great uncle,
Thomas Anthony
Joyce, won 27 caps for
England, while playing for
Gloucester Rugby, during
the 1920s

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Tom **VOYCE**

Kingsholm News

with Bob Fenton

WELL talk about coming down to earth with a bump... After the giddy heights of the LV= Cup Final comes the complete annihilation at Harlequins.

To be honest I half expected the unbeaten run to grind to a halt somewhere, and Quins – with their returning international players – was as likely as anywhere. I didn't expect the stop to be quite as shuddering though...

Quite what the reasons behind that result were we'll never know. For sure Quins played us off the park and looked well up for it, where we seemed to be treading water at times – or even treacle. It wasn't on a par with the game when they destroyed us with only 14 men, though.

I guess we shouldn't be that surprised it happened, after the massive high of the cup final there was always a risk of a bumpy return to earth.

But what a high it was, and what a great position we are in now. With our place in the Heineken Cup assured for next season, a heck of a lot of pressure is off.

While others scratch and sweat on qualification our guys can make sure their passports are all up to date and look forward to some interesting trips next season.

I got a text off a mate just after the cup final moaning that, in his opinion, the LV= Cup winners didn't deserve a place in the Heineken Cup.



His argument was that the competition favoured clubs that were not losing players during the autumn internationals and six nations competition.

I suggested that he count the number of players that we missed compared to the number his team had lost and then try that argument again. Grapes and sour, me thinks.

For those that made the trip to Northampton, the day couldn't have been much better. Great stadium, great weather and great to be among Gloucester supporters who were determined to enjoy the day – confident but not overly so (after all we're quite used to final let downs)

but deep down we know this one was going to be different.

When Tim 'Mr Shedweb' Molenaar put Tom Voyce away into the corner early in the first half, I was confident that the game was ours. And, when the normally highly reliable Jimmy Gopperth missed a couple of kicks that he would have usually got with his eyes closed, I knew it was ours.

A couple of scatty moments after half time maybe gave Newcastle a glimmer of hope, but some real champagne rugby – and especially Eliota's try – put everything to bed.

And if ever there was a score that was worthy of winning a cup final it was

“...EVEN THE NEWCASTLE FANS SAT IN THE CORNER WHERE THE TRY WAS SCORED WERE APPLAUDING. SOME MOMENTS IN SPORT TRANSCEND TEAM LOYALTIES, AND THAT WAS ONE.”

that one. It happened right in front of where I was standing; such was the speed of passing that it was impossible to work out what had happened until you saw Eliota scampering round towards the posts, hotly trailed by an ecstatic Nicky Robinson.

Even trying to watch it replayed on the screen at the opposite end of the ground it was hard to see what happened!

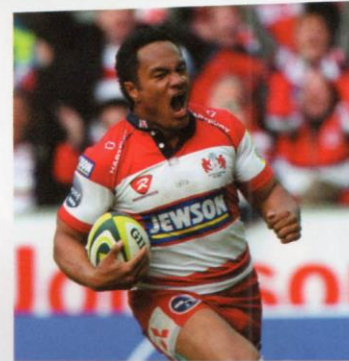
Watching it on the TV later though... outstanding. The speed of movement and accuracy of those little passes was a thing of beauty – one of the best tries I have seen. Even the Newcastle fans sat in the corner where the try was scored were applauding. Some moments in sport transcend team loyalties, and that was one.

Another was Charlie Sharples' 'superman-like' leap and catch of

a cross field kick. I reckon he must have been about a mile off the ground when he got to that ball.

I guess the only downside to the final was the fact that a lot of the stadium was empty, and that must have made it a bit odd for the players, and especially for the Newcastle players. When you think back a few years the cup competition final was played at Twickenham in front of an almost full house, now we struggle to fill a much smaller venue. I know times are tight, but you can't help wondering where everyone has gone.

I didn't envy the Newcastle fans on their journey though, before the game we were chatting with a couple of guys who had made the trip down on one of their coaches, they left before I had even got out of bed.



And it must have been a long journey home afterwards – we've all done that journey having left a final empty handed, every minute seems like an hour, so they definitely had my sympathy.

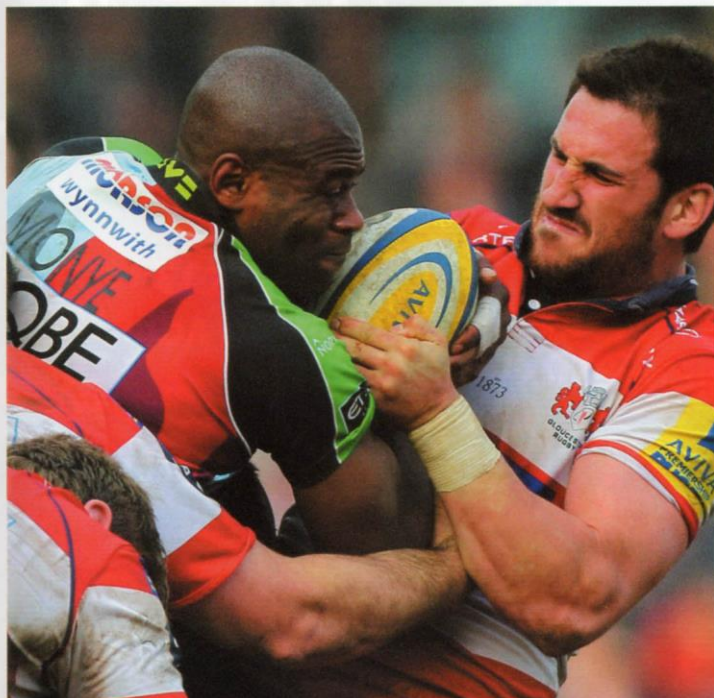
Credit to those that made the trip though, they tried to get behind their boys. But truth be told, they didn't have that much to shout about. And they were outnumbered by the travelling Gloucester support by about three to one...

And in one of those ironic twists that sport throws up, our next visitors to Kingsholm are Newcastle...

Recent results at the bottom of the table have taken the pressure off them a bit – Leeds look dead in the water now – but they will be keen to get the points to (a) get a bit of revenge for the cup final, and (b) create even more space between them and the dreaded relegation spot.

Even allowing for those two motivating factors, I can't see any other result other than a home won.

Sorry Falcons, but that's just the way it is.



Dave King's

WORLD OF RUGBY

Congratulations to all concerned with the emphatic LV= Cup Final victory versus Newcastle Falcons at Franklins Gardens. To see the sheer delight on the faces of the thousands of Cherry & White supporters at the final whistle is a lifelong memory.

As we are all well aware our club was formed on 15th September 1873 but what is not so well known is that in the first match played following that memorable date was that the club only fielded ten players against the College School!

Although matches were not played on a regular basis at Kingsholm until 1890-91 season, that match against the College School was staged here on this site.

Those ten players fielded proved too muscular and weighty for the 'boys' they opposed. The actual score was 1 goal and 6 tries to nil.

The 'City' team as the club was then known were represented by: - F.Hartley (Captain), J.P.Riddiford, W.A. Lucy, E.L.Bosse, A.King, John Boughton, W.A.Boughton, J.A.Bayfour, R.Ping and McKenzie.

At the first annual meeting of the club the entrance fee of 5/- was abolished and the future subscription of all playing members from that date would be 5/-. Interestingly the first balance sheet of the club showed a total income of £11 from all sources.

The progress of the club in its first 50 years of existence can be judged in its financial statement in 1923! In that year the club had a membership of 2,504.

The gate receipts totalled £2,296-

7s-6d; £926 was paid in Amusement Tax, surely recent governments have missed out on this one?

This left a balance of £2,188. The club also held 2,099 shares in the Football Ground Company, a separate identity.

In that first fifty years it is worth noting that there were two topics that dominated the club's history, one of joy and one of despair.

It is only appropriate to deal with the one of despair first. The Great

War broke out in 1914 and it was not until the 1919-1920 season that the game resumed on a serious note.

Almost to a man the club's players volunteered for service. No fewer than 18 players forfeited their lives. They were: - H.Berry, H.Collins, C.Cummings, G.Griffiths, H.Hancock, W.D.Henderson, S.Millard, W.Parham, W.J.Pearce, T.Powell, J.Price, A.Purton, P.Roach, A.Russell, A.Saunders, P.Simmonds, S.Sysum.

There were several players who



returned to the club in A.Hudson, F.Webb, J.Hamblin, W.Washbourne, A.Lewis, F.Ayliff, A.Hall, J.F.Lawson, J.Harris, N.Hayes and S.Smart.

George Holford was severely wounded in the early stages of the war but recovered and took over the club captaincy for the resuming season of 1919-1920.

The two Cook brothers were not so fortunate, A.Cook lost one of his legs and his brother, C.Cook lost the sight of one eye. The latter did eventually resume playing but at a lesser standard due to his severe injury.

On a more pleasant chord, Fred Webb led the club in the 1920-1921 season to an unbeaten record at Kingsholm in home fixtures, the record was: played 20 – won 19, drew 1. The club recorded 289 points for as against 88 by the opponents.

In that memorable record was a victory against Newport where a record was broken in gate receipts, the total was £768. All four principle Welsh clubs were defeated – Cardiff, Newport, Swansea and Llanelli.

Tom Millington broke the club record in the following season of 1921-1922 when he scored 154 points. In achieving this feat he surpassed George Romans total of 152 points established in the season of 1905-1906.

It would be inappropriate not to record that the first fifty years of the club's history was marked by an astonishing record established by Arthur Hudson.

A truly brilliant playing career not matched by any player before or since in which he began his career in the 1902-1903 season appearing in 260 matches for this club and scoring 236 tries! The previous best was 141 recorded by Charles Smith.

Arthur was not confined to just scoring at club level, in eight international appearances for England he scored ten tries. For the County team he totalled 14 tries in 28 matches.

Those first fifty years of the club's history show how the club progressed. In the 1876-1877 season when J.F.Brown was the captain a mere eleven matches were played. In 1923-1924 under the captaincy of Tom Millington there were thirty-nine

matches in the club's fixture list!

That was not the highest totalled fulfilled for the previous season there were forty-three matches played.

One of the more remarkable seasons was that of 1900-1901 when George Romans was the club captain. A mere 75 points were conceded, with the 'City' as the club were then referred to, recording 522 points., a remarkable record in any season.

Only once was the captaincy shared when George Romans and William Johns shared the honour in the 1904-1905 season.

One year later the latter led the club to recording their highest points total in the first fifty years of this great club's history with a total of 661.

Of course the fixture list in those seasons bears no resemblance to the one that we experience today. Only Leicester, Exeter and Bath of the current Aviva Premiership clubs were encountered.

Some clubs have been cast to the past, names such as St Helens Recreation, Old Edwardians, Devon Nomads, Middlesex Wanderers, Old Crocks, Pill Harriers, Second Glosters, First Glosters and London Hospitals were illustrious names for supporters to behold.

The great Arthur Hudson almost led the club to an impeccable home

record in the 1909-1910 season with just one loss when Headingley visited Kingsholm and returned to the North with a 15 point to eight victory.

It was left to Fred Webb's team in the 1920-1921 season to achieve this feat when the club recorded 19 wins from their 21 fixtures at Kingsholm.

The other two fixtures were drawn against United Services and Pontypool. Ironically both matches had an identical scoreline with five points apiece!

This afternoon we welcome Newcastle to Kingsholm. Since the advent of professional Rugby Union they have visited on 13 occasions.

Their only victory came on their first visit in the 1997-1998 season when they returned north following a 37 points to twenty-seven victory.

Since that season they have suffered twelve successive defeats, conceding 391 points and scoring 261 points from the thirteen matches played.

Further to the query posed by Bob Fenton in his notes for the Bath programme, the answer to whether we have defeated Bath, Northampton and Wasps in away matches in one season is NO, in both the professional and amateur era. In the amateur era we were thwarted by lack of a fixture!

- 
- In the 1963-64 season – we defeated Bath 19-11, Northampton 6-3 but no Wasps Fixture.
 - In the 1964-65 season – we defeated Bath 8-6, Wasps 9-8, but no Northampton fixture.
 - In the 1968-69 season – we defeated Bath 19-13, Wasps 22-14, again no Northampton fixture.
 - In the 1975-76 season – we defeated Bath 18-15, Northampton 20-3, no Wasps fixture.
 - In the 1977-78 season – we defeated Bath 12-10, Wasps 13-3, no Northampton fixture.
 - In the 1981-82 season – we defeated Bath 12-6, Northampton 14-7, no Wasps fixture.

GL13AX Gloucester Talk

with Peter Arnold

LIGHTNING STRIKING TWICE



It's odd how things work out. Here are we, barely recovered from the hangovers resulting from post-Cup celebrations, and lo and behold, the first team to visit Kingsholm after that memorable day in Northampton turn out to be Newcastle Falcons, the very team we had to brush aside before we could get our greedy mitts on the handsome Anglo Welsh Trophy.

It's not in our nature to gloat in such circumstances (unless Bath provide the opposition, of course), but I hope the Northerners will pardon us if we celebrate our triumph just a little today.

At the time of writing, I don't know if the Cup is to be paraded around the ground, but if so, and I hope it is, it won't be with any intention to rub the Falcons' noses in it (do falcons have noses? Well, you get what I mean).

After all, we couldn't have won the Cup without their wholehearted co-operation, and they certainly provided that.

It's a memorable time here at Kingsholm, and perhaps it's fitting that we can share it with such respected opponents.

As for the real business of the day, I don't suppose that anyone thinks the

game is going to be a walkover.

Newcastle are a team which is showing glimmers, recently, of becoming a potent force once again. Their main focus, at the moment, must be to keep their place in the Premiership, and that means winning today. I imagine that there will also be a revenge factor in there somewhere.

Our situation is exactly the reverse. We would dearly like to finish in the top two of the table come play-off time.

A loss today would severely dent that aspiration, bearing in mind the tough period to come. We have to face Leicester, Saracens and Northampton within an eight-day period, so we must not drop any more points than we can help.

So this isn't just a repeat of the Cup Final. It's a whole new ball game.

HAS OLIVIER PAID UP?

Of course, there could be another contributory factor in our alarming display at the Stoop. Some weeks ago, I read in Olivier Azam's entertaining as always press column a challenge which simply could not be ignored.

He wrote that if Gloucester were to win the LV=Cup, they were to bring it to his restaurant in Cheltenham and he'd supply the champagne.

As all the world knows, we did win, but I haven't heard whether Ollie's challenge was accepted.

If so, it must have been quite an occasion.

Our Mr Azam may be one of the world's toughest hookers, but he is undoubtedly a man of his word, and I don't suppose he's stingy when it comes to dishing out the bubbly.

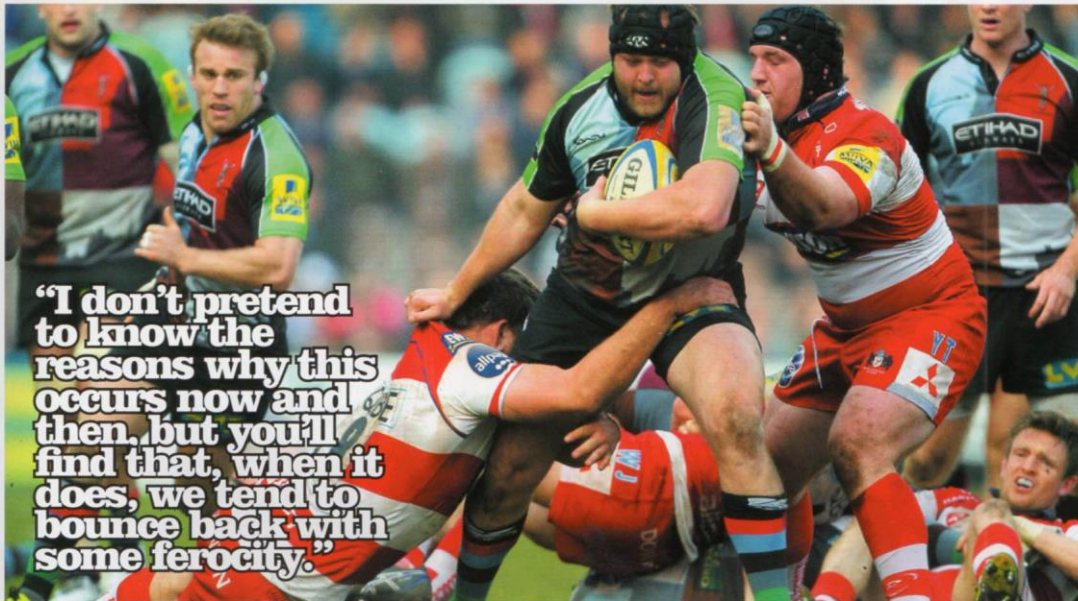
Rugby players have traditionally a gargantuan thirst when it comes to things alcoholic, and I imagine that they would have done justice to the occasion. However, it's not the best preparation for such a tricky assignment as a Premiership match against Harlequins.

The word 'hangover' was



bandied around quite a bit before and after the Quins game. Was it a factor, and did it have less to do with Cup winners' euphoria than with Ollie's Bolly?

AFTER THE LORD MAYOR'S SHOW



"I don't pretend to know the reasons why this occurs now and then, but you'll find that, when it does, we tend to bounce back with some ferocity."

I suppose it was inevitable that we should be brought down to earth after all that euphoria. And we were.

In spades. There's no point in being mealy mouthed about it. Quins stuffed us. Worse, they humiliated us.

We can point out that the lads from the Stoop had had a week off, while our Cup Final had taken place only six days earlier, which must have placed extra mental and physical strain on our players.

We can also argue that the return of so many injured players and international squad members must

have a disruptive influence after the valiant efforts of the tight-knit group who had soldiered on so remarkably over the previous weeks.

But these aren't reasons for the debacle; they're mere excuses. The fact is that we were outplayed by a better team on the day.

Gloucester didn't look anything like the side which had so efficiently demolished Bath and the Dragons not so long ago.

Seldom have I seen a cherry-and-white pack taken apart in the loose so conspicuously. That simply doesn't happen to a Gloucester front eight.

Of course, we missed Bucko and

Hazey, but their replacements looked more than adequate on paper.

Neither have I seen Gloucester miss quite so many tackles for a very long time.

It's not the first time that the wheels have come off so spectacularly this season. It happened up at Leeds, and it certainly happened at Kingsholm in the La Rochelle game.

I don't pretend to know the reasons why this occurs now and then, but you'll find that, when it does, we tend to bounce back with some ferocity.

Which doesn't sound good for Newcastle.

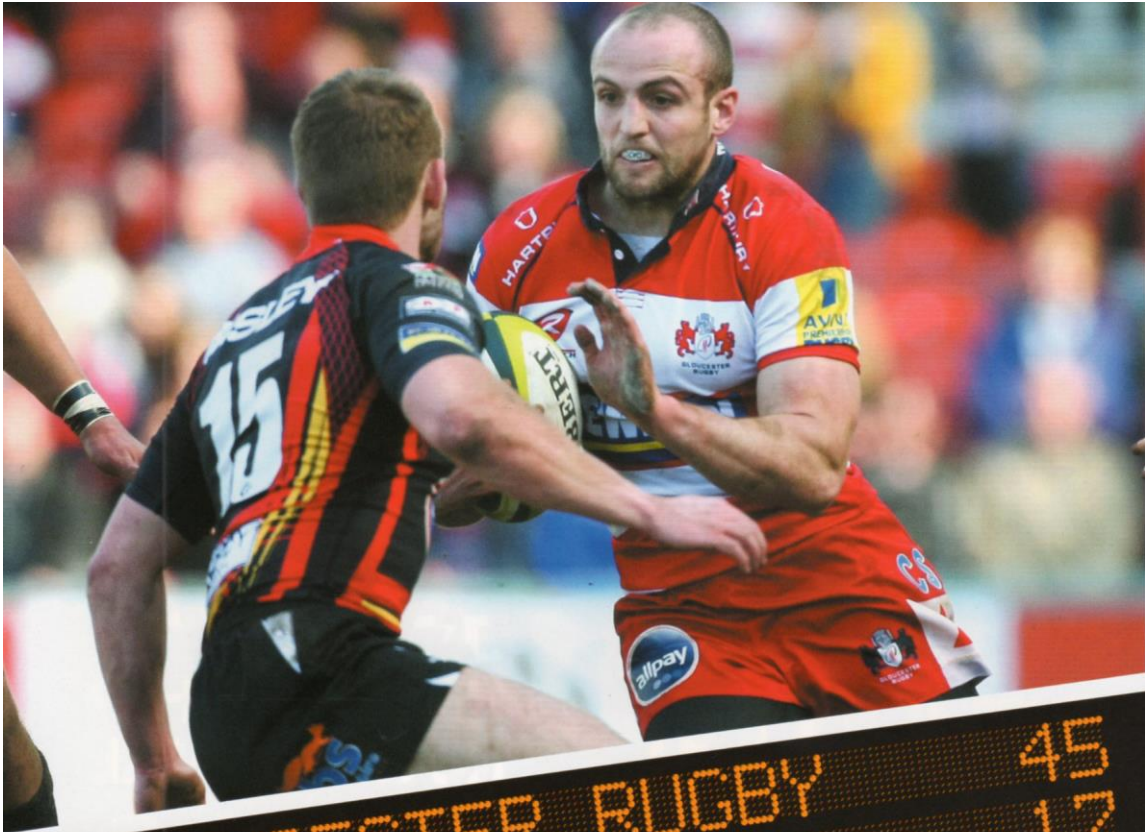
TOUGH COUPLE OF WEEKS

Whatever the cause of last week's malaise, the lads had better get over it quickly.

Three games coming up in eight days: Leicester and Saracens away, and Northampton at home.

Bearing in mind recent events, we might have been optimistic about the Saints match, but I watched them put a hapless Wasps side to the sword last week, and now I'm not so sure.





GLOUCESTER RUGBY 45
 DRAGONS 17

A second half try blitz by winger Charlie Sharples helped to secure Gloucester's safe passage into the LV= Cup final as the Dragons were slain by 45 points to 17.

Sharples burst of four tries in 21 minutes sealed the game and ensured that Gloucester succeeded in making their third Anglo Welsh final in succession.

The final scoreline was emphatic but the Dragons certainly made Gloucester work hard for the win despite the visitors being rocked by a near disastrous start to the game.

Early tries from Hazell and Fuimaono-



TRY 3min Hazell (5-0)

TRY 11min Fuimaono-Sapolu (10-0)
CON 12min Robinson (12-0)

TRY 32min Robinson (17-0)

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

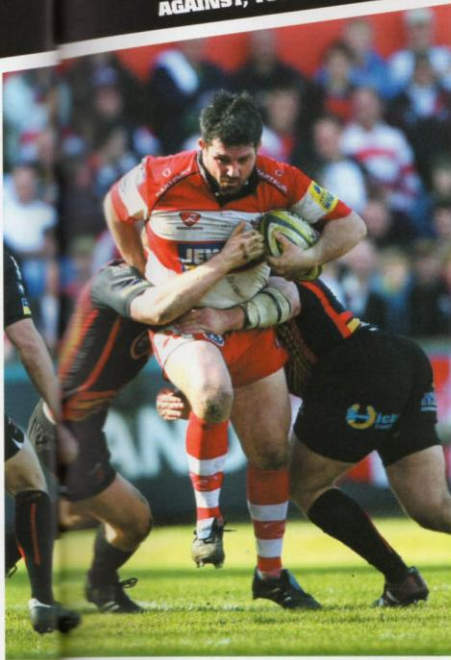
GLOUCESTER
 RUGBY.CO.UK

KEY MOMENT



TRY 32min Robinson (17-0)
The Dragons were working their way back into the game and Gloucester had endured a couple of close escapes when Nicky Robinson intercepted Jason Tovey's pass and returned it all the way for a score to swing the momentum back in Gloucester's favour.

"WE NEVER REALLY CONTROLLED THE GAME IN THE FIRST HALF, ALTHOUGH IN THE SECOND HALF WE WERE GOOD. WE HAD A COUPLE OF INDIVIDUALS WHO JUMPED OFF SCRIPT, WHICH IS FINE WHEN YOU ARE GOING FORWARD AND IN THE RIGHT AREAS OF THE PITCH, BUT NOT NECESSARILY IN THE WRONG AREAS. NO MATTER WHO YOU ARE PLAYING AGAINST, YOU CAN'T EVER DO THAT." BRYAN REDPATH



Sapolu got Gloucester off to a flier and, with the Kingsholm crowd loving every minute of it, things looked grim for the Men from Gwent.

To their credit, the Dragons showed great fortitude and rallied to give Gloucester some nervy moments as their forwards and backs linked well and only a couple of unfortunate bounces prevented them from getting onto the scoreboard.

The precision had disappeared from Gloucester's play and a succession of handling errors gifted unexpected possession to the visitors who, still only trailing by 12 points, clearly fancied their chances of mounting a serious

comeback.

Nicky Robinson's interception killed off the fight back, however, and eased Gloucester into a 17-0 half time lead.

The Dragons needed an early second half score to get back into the game but when Henry Trinder put Charlie Sharples into the corner for the first of his tries, the writing was on the wall.

The visitors did rally with a try for second row Adam Jones but Darren Edward's side were then blown away by three more for Sharples.

The biggest worry for Gloucester was the number of knocks they were picking up. Bryan Redpath withdrew a few players to keep them out of harm's way and we had the rare sight of Tim Taylor at scrum half, Darren Dawidiuk on the flank and even Charlie Sharples packing down on the openside.

With the game now safely in the bag and Gloucester supporters already planning their trip to Franklin's Gardens, the Dragons restored some pride with two late tries but the day very much belonged to Gloucester.

THE LINE UPS



SEMI-FINAL

GLoucester Rugby

15. Olly Morgan
14. Charlie Sharples
13. Henry Trinder
12. Eliota Fuimaono-Sapolu
11. Tom Voyce
10. Nicky Robinson
9. Jordi Pasqualin
1. Nick Wood
2. Olivier Azam
3. Rupert Harden
4. Jim Hamilton
5. Alex Brown
6. Peter Buxton
7. Andrew Hazell
8. Luke Narraway

16. Darren Dawidiuk
17. Yann Thomas
18. Shaun Knight
19. Will James
20. Akapusi Qera
21. Tim Taylor
22. Freddie Burns
23. Jonny May

DRAGONS

15. Martyn Thomas
14. Will Harries
13. Tom Riley
12. Patrick Leach
11. Aled Brew
10. Jason Tovey
9. Wayne Evans
1. Phil Price
2. Lloyd Burns
3. Dan Way
4. Luke Charteris
5. Adam Jones
6. Andrew Coombs
7. Lewis Evans
8. Toby Faletau

16. Steve Jones
17. Hugh Gustafson
18. Patrick Palmer
19. Adam Brown
20. Jevon Groves
21. Adam Hughes
22. Jonathan Evans
23. Matthew Jones

TRY 44min Sharples (22-0)
CON 45min Robinson (24-0)

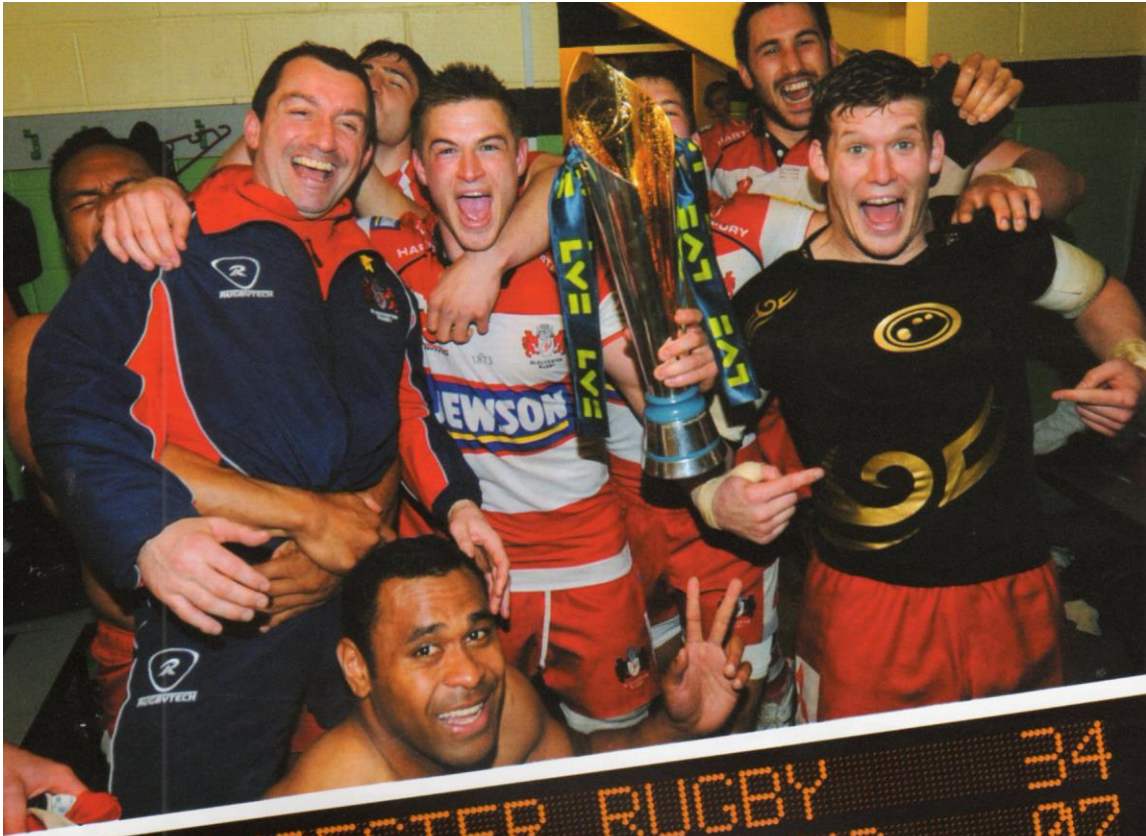
TRY 50min AM Jones (24-5)
TRY 53min Sharples (29-5)
CON 54min Robinson (31-5)
TRY 56min Sharples (36-5)
CON 57min Robinson (38-5)

TRY 64min Sharples (43-5)
CON 65min Robinson (45-5)

TRY 78min Groves (45-15)
CON 79min Tovey (45-17)

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

TICKET HOTLINE | 0871 871 8781 | 61



GLOUCESTER RUGBY 34
 NEWCASTLE FALCONS 07

Gloucester made it third time lucky at Franklin's Gardens, as following previous defeats against the Cardiff Blues and Northampton Saints, they finally lifted the Anglo Welsh Cup.

Relief was mixed with pure delight as Bryan Redpath's side saw off the challenge of a determined Newcastle Falcons side who had perhaps peaked a week earlier with their semi final victory over Harlequins.

The venue may well have been Franklin's Gardens, Northampton but, for one glorious afternoon, it was temporarily annexed as part of Gloucester and the Cherry and White clad



TRY 6min Voyce (5-0)
CON 7min Robinson (7-0)

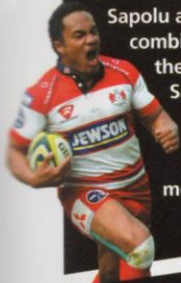
PEN 20min Robinson (10-0)

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

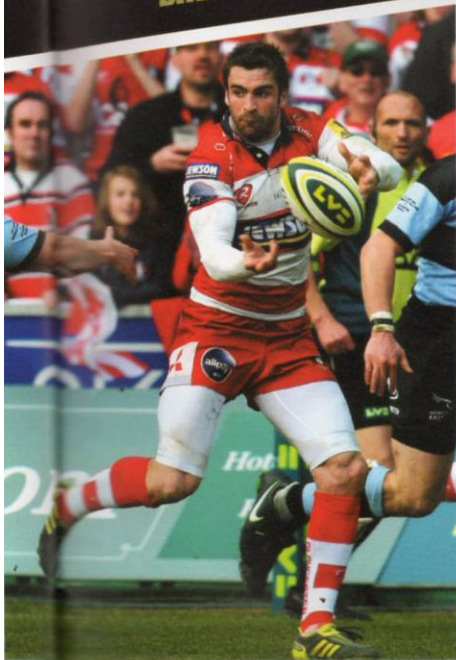
GLOUCESTER
 RUGBY.CO.UK

KEY MOMENT

TRY 57min Robinson (18-0)
 Gloucester had opened up a 13-0 lead but Eliota Fuimaono Sapolu's sublime try on the hour effectively settled the game. Dazzling running lines and offloads saw Matt Cox, Fuimaono-Sapolu and Nicky Robinson combine to carve open the Falcons and the Samoan centre could barely hide his glee at the quality of the move.



"THE PLAYERS SHOULD BE HAPPY ABOUT WINNING SOMETHING BECAUSE WE SET OUR SIGHTS TO GET AS HIGH AS WE CAN IN THE PREMIERSHIP AND WIN A COMPETITION."
BRYAN REDPATH



supporters celebrated long and hard.

To Newcastle's credit, the celebrations couldn't really get going until the final 15 minutes or so. It took that long for Gloucester to finally put the game to bed.

It wasn't for the wanting of a great start. Tom Voyce crossed for the first try after only eight minutes but scoring chances were scarce after that as both defences did their job.

Nicky Robinson added a penalty to extend the lead to 10-0 while the Falcons fans rubbed their eyes in disbelief as the normally reliable Jimmy Gopperth missed with two eminently kickable efforts.

As the game moved into the second half, Gloucester still couldn't quite hit their stride and the Falcons refused to roll over. Robinson added a second penalty for 13-0 before Gloucester suddenly clicked into gear.

Remaining patient and retaining possession, Gloucester probed for an opening and it finally came.

Fuimaono-Sapolu ghosted down the left and linked with Cox and then Robinson utilising an array of no look passes and incisive running lines, cutting the Newcastle defence to shreds as the Samoan crossed for a crucial score.

The next score, a slick backs move freeing up Charlie Sharples to scamper home, swiftly followed and the Falcons goose was cooked.

Newcastle rallied briefly and Luke Eves barged his way over from close range to get his side onto the scoreboard but Gloucester had the final word as they bullied their way over the line with a well executed catch and drive to clinch the win in style and officially kick start the party.

THE LINE UPS



FINAL

GLOUCESTER RUGBY

15. Olly Morgan
14. Charlie Sharples
13. Tim Molenaar
12. Eliota Fuimaono-Sapolu
11. Tom Voyce
10. Nicky Robinson
9. Jordi Pasqualin
1. Nick Wood
2. Olivier Azam
3. Rupert Harden
4. Jim Hamilton
5. Alex Brown
6. Akapusi Qera
7. Andrew Hazell
8. Luke Narraway
16. Darren Dawidiuk
17. Yann Thomas
18. Shaun Knight
19. Will James
20. Matt Cox
21. Tim Taylor
22. Freddie Burns
23. Henry Trinder

NEWCASTLE FALCONS

15. Alex Tait
14. Luke Fielden
13. Tane Tu'ipulotu
12. James Fitzpatrick
11. Luke Eves
10. Jimmy Gopperth
9. Micky Young
1. Jon Golding
2. Matt Thompson
3. Kieran Brookes
4. James Hudson
5. Andrew van der Heijden
6. Tim Swinson
7. Brent Wilson
8. Ally Hogg
16. Rob Vickers
17. Grant Shiells
18. James Hall
19. Filippo Levi
20. Mark Wilson
21. Hall Charlton
22. Gcobani Bobo
23. Tom Catterick

PEN 51min Robinson (13-0)
TRY 57min Fuimaono-Sapolu (18-0)
CON 58min Robinson (20-0)

TRY 66min Sharples (25-0)
CON 67min Robinson (27-0)

TRY 74min Eves (27-5)
CON 74min Charlton (27-7)
TRY 80min Dawidiuk (32-7)
CON 80min Robinson (34-7)

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

TICKET HOTLINE | 0871 871 8781 | 65

VS. NEWCASTLE FALCONS // 02.04.11

TODAY'S LINE-UPS

GLOUCESTER RUGBY

	PTCT FREDDIE BURNS
3-0	T JONNY MAY
10-0	
10-3	TIM MOLENAAR
10-6	
10-9	ELIOTA FUIMAONO-SAPOLU
-	
13-9	TOM VOYCE
20-9	NICKY ROBINSON
27-9	
34-9	T RORY LAWSON
	NICK WOOD
	OLIVIER AZAM
	PAUL DORAN-JONES
	JIM HAMILTON
	ALEX BROWN
	ALASDAIR STROKOSCH
	QERA ANDY HAZELL
	LUKE NARRAWAY (C)
	SCOTT LAWSON
	ALASDAIR DICKINSON
	RUPERT HARDEN
	DAVE ATTWOOD
	AKAPUSI QERA
	JORDI PASQUALIN
	ccc TIM TAYLOR
	T HENRY TRINDER

NEWCASTLE FALCONS

15	TOM CATTERICK
FULLBACK	TRI-POLITO ALEX TAIT
14	
WING	vickinson LUKE EVES
13	
CENTRE	JAMES FITZPATRICK
12	
CENTRE	RIKKI SHERIFFE
11	
WING	JIMMY GOPPERTH ppp
10	
FLY-HALF	MICKY YOUNG
9	
SCRUM-HALF	SHIELLS JONNY GOLDING
1	vickinson MATT THOMPSON
PROP	
2	
HOOKER	EUAN MURRAY
3	
PROP	JAMES HUDSON (C)
4	
LOCK	WILSON ANDREW VAN DER HEIJDEN
5	
LOCK	TIM SWINSON
6	
FLANKER	WILL WELCH
7	
FLANKER	ALLY HOGG
8	
NO.8	ROB VICKERS
16	GRANT SHIELLS
17	KIERAN BROOKES
18	MARK WILSON
19	ALEX GRAY
20	CHRIS PILGRIM
21	TANE TU'IPULOTU
22	JOEL HODGSON
23	

MATCH SCORE

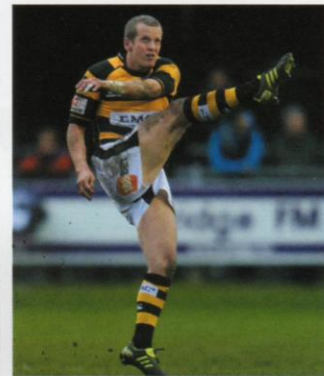
GLOUCESTER RUGBY	
v	
NEWCASTLE FALCONS	

REFEREE: Sean Davey **REUTERS**
ASST REFEREES: John Helm and Nigel Carrick

THE STATS THAT MATTER

TOP POINTS SCORERS

PLAYER	TOTAL
DAVE WALDER*	184
NICK EVANS	175
JIMMY GOPPERTH	173
RYAN LAMB	157
GARETH STEENSON	149



TOP TRY SCORERS

PLAYER	TOTAL
TOPSY OJO*	7
MANU TUILAGI	7
PAUL DIGGIN	6
SCOTT HAMILTON	6
GEORGE LOWE	6

