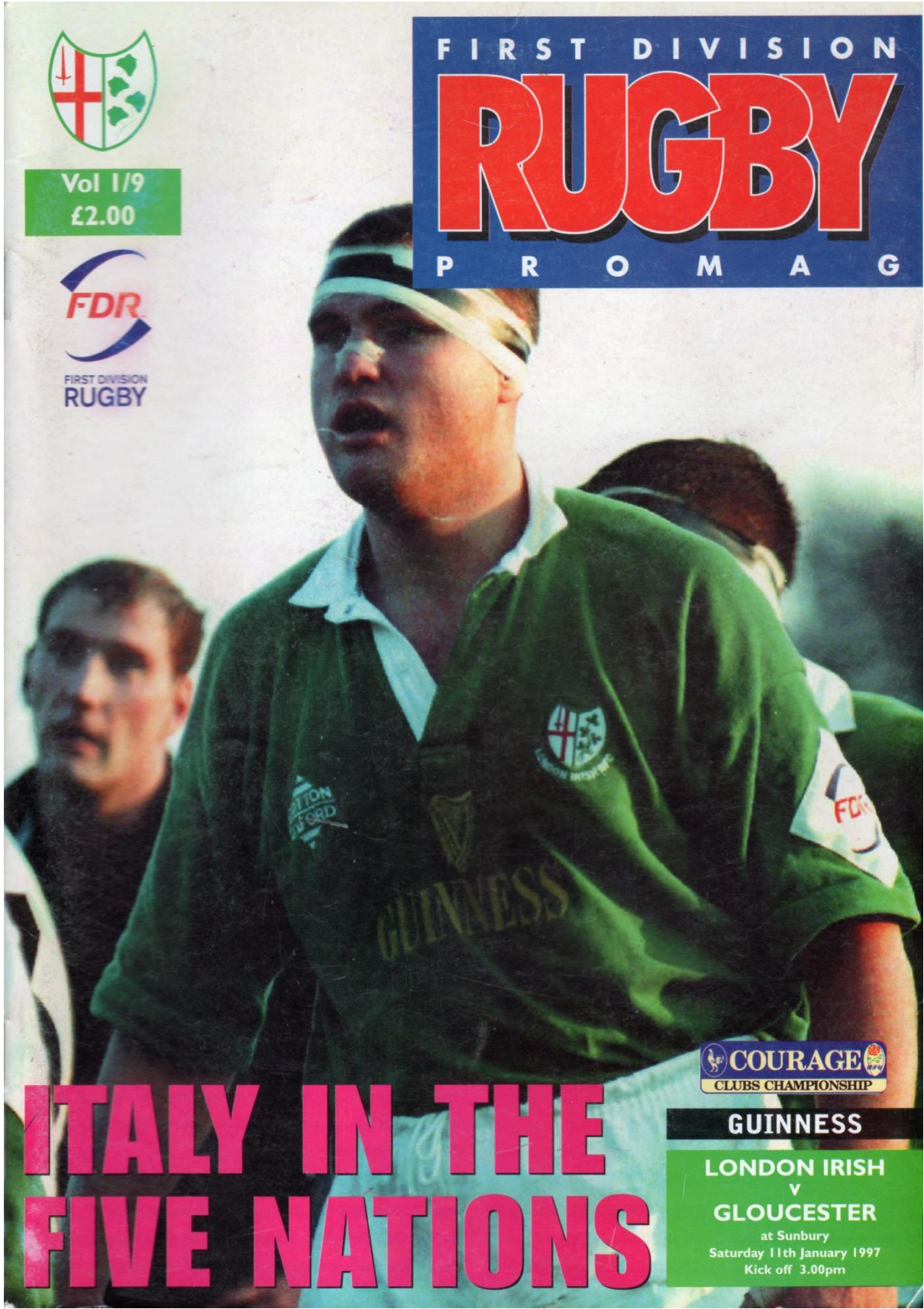




Vol 1/9  
£2.00



FIRST DIVISION  
**RUGBY**  
P R O M A G



**ITALY IN THE  
FIVE NATIONS**



**GUINNESS**  
**LONDON IRISH**  
**v**  
**GLOUCESTER**  
at Sunbury  
Saturday 11th January 1997  
Kick off 3.00pm

# Today's Visitors:

The Cherry and Whites are the epitome of English provincial rugby, and proud of it, you don't have to be born within the sound of the Kingsholm crowd to play for Gloucester, but it helps! Gloucester is the City that behaves like a village and is unusual, possibly unique among English cities (proper ones I mean not your fancy dans like "Barf") in that rugby is the City sport, not football. It is rumoured that there is a football team but it is of little consequence when compared with the pride of Kingsholm. Coventry used to be like that before it all went downhill, there's serious signs of a revival now but Gloucester remains supreme for the moment.

Proximity to the Welsh Marches has always been a factor in the strength of Gloucester's rugby, regular fixtures with Welsh teams hardened and honed the rugby, especially the forwards so that when "competitive" rugby came into the English game, Gloucester were at the forefront. Winners of the first ever Cup Final, Gloucester beat Moseley in 1972, Leicester in 1978 and shared the trophy (John Player Cup, remember it?) with Moseley in 1982.

Early days of the Courage League were the heyday of Gloucester, runners up in 1988-89, and 1989-90, when they really ought to have won the Title, but things have faded a little since then. Last season saw a Lazarus like recovery from seemingly certain relegation, having won only one game out of ten a

New Year climb back culminated in a win over Bristol and a Cup run that led to a semi-final. Then on a night that saw scenes in Gloucester akin to the relief of Mafeking, a victory over Bath on a wet and stormy night

at Kingsholm.

Many a Kingsholm regular would have traded relegation for that win! A final victory over Saracens ensured safety, notwithstanding the pusillanimous efforts of the authorities to decry logic and commonsense and "restructure".

All this and no mention of "The Shed", home of all that is balanced and analytical among English supporters, always ready to appreciate the finer points of the opposition's game plan. The fanzine "Shed Head" is probably the best of its kind, lively, vibrant, witty and exuding equanimity. If you want to experience true rugby feeling, untainted by sponsors, squad numbers, corporate hospitality and expensive foreign imports, go West, go to the Shed and soak in the atmosphere, it is electric, or it would be if it had been invented yet!

After another poor start to this league season the Cherry and Whites are moving towards mid

## Gloucester

table respectability and it should not be long before the Kingsholm team is a genuine force in the land. They typify English rugby at its quintessential best, traditional values, honest endeavour and some real young talent on show. Among the many unsung heroes on show today watch out for Mark Mapletoft, he may yet have a part to play in England's search for a number 10!



	P	W	D	L		Points for	Points Against
<b>L Irish</b>	133	63	7	63	50%	2511	2776
<b>Glos</b>	131	62	7	62	50%	2213	2184



FOUNDED 1873

Saturday 11th January 1997 Kick-off 3.00 pm

## LONDON IRISH

Green & White

## GLOUCESTER

Cherry & White

15	Conor O'Shea (I)	Full Back	Chris Catling	15
14	Justin Bishop	Right Wing	Mike Peters	14
13	Rob Henderson (I)	Centre	Don Caskie	13
12	Sean Burns	Centre	Martin Roberts	12
11	Niall Woods (I)	Left Wing	Mike Lloyd	11
10	David Humphreys (I)	Outside Half	Mark Mapletoft	10
9	Tim Ewington	Scrum Half	Scott Benton	9
1	Justin Fitzpatrick	Prop	Tony Windo	1
2	Rob Kellam	Hooker	Phil Greening (I)	2
3	Gary Halpin * (I)	Prop	Andy Deacon	3
4	Gabriel Fulcher (I)	Lock	Rob Fidler	4
5	Jeremy Davidson (I)	Lock	Dave Sims *	
6	Ken O'Connell (I)	Flanker	Pete Glanville	6
7	Kieron Dawson	Flanker	Nathan Carter	7
8	Barry Walsh	No.8	Simon Devereux	8
16	Tony Redmond	Replacements	Laurie Beck	16
17	Liam Mooney		Peter Hart	17
18	Victor Costello (I)		Warwick Bullock	18
19	Ray Hennessy		Andy Stanley	19
20				20
21				21

Match Sponsor

M. J. Clancy

Referee

G Warren RFU