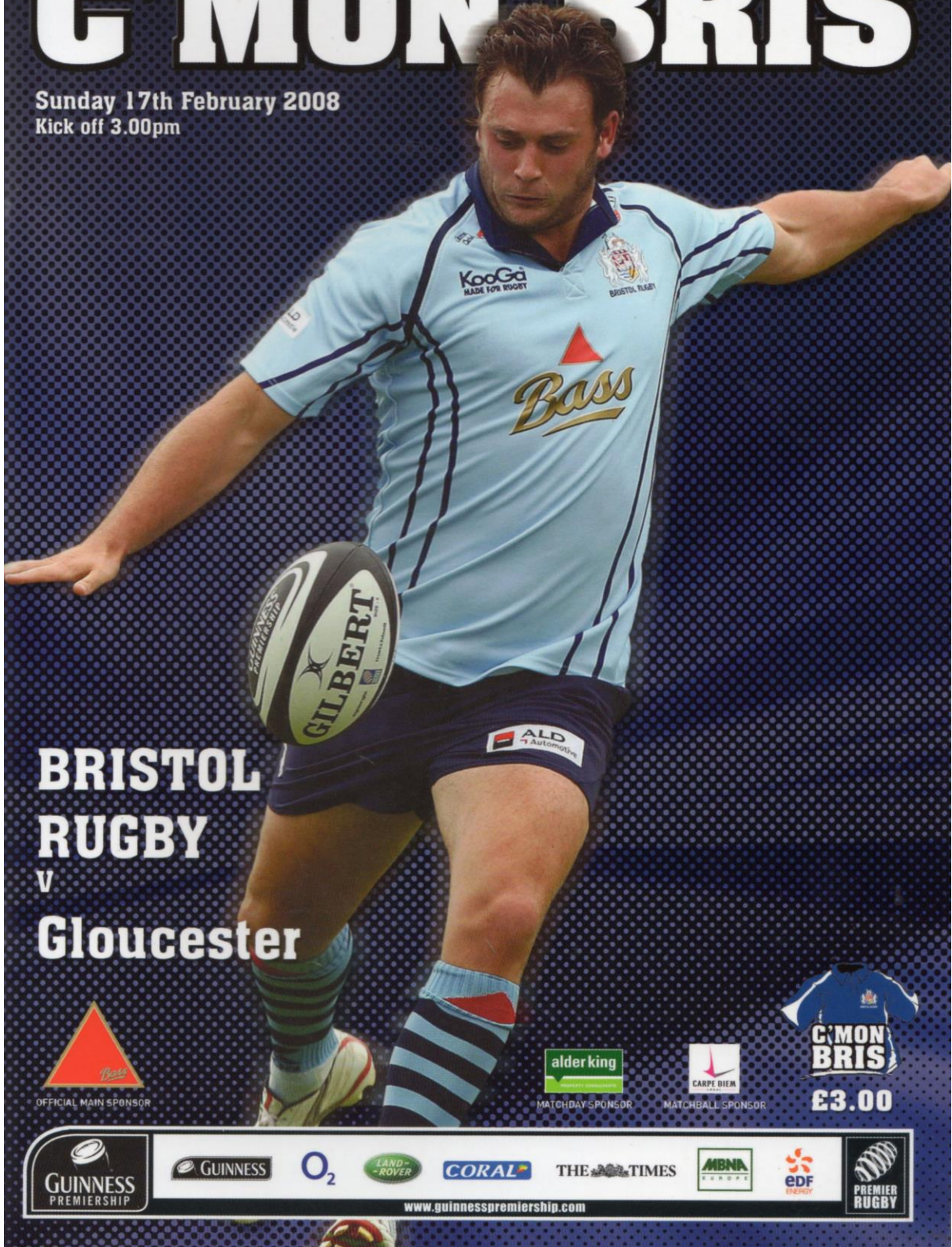


The Official Matchday Programme

C'MON BRIS

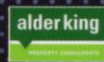
Sunday 17th February 2008
Kick off 3.00pm



**BRISTOL
RUGBY
v
Gloucester**



OFFICIAL MAIN SPONSOR



MATCHDAY SPONSOR



MATCHBALL SPONSOR



£3.00

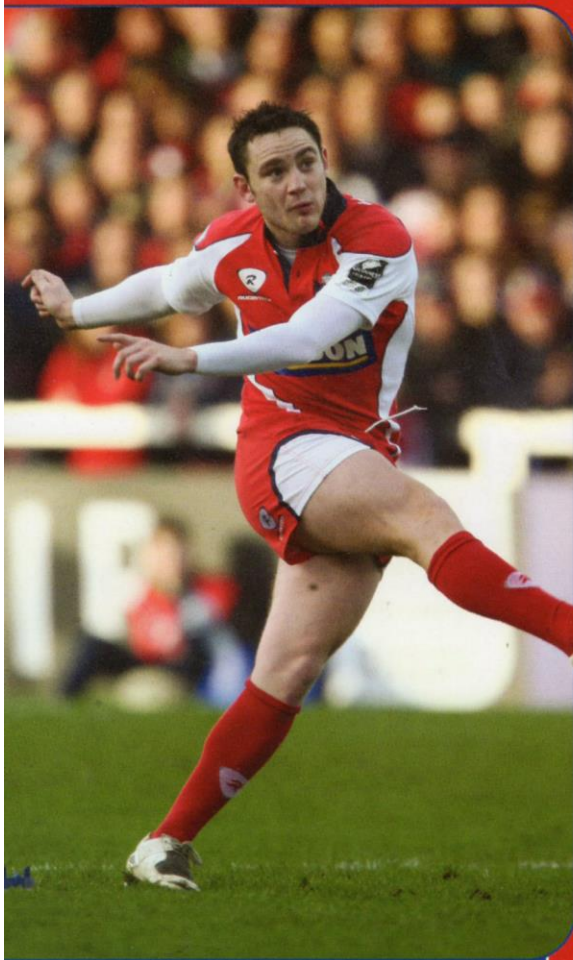
GUINNESS PREMIERSHIP | GUINNESS | O₂ | LAND-ROVER | CORAL | THE TIMES | MBNA | EDF ENERGY | PREMIER RUGBY

www.guinnesspremiership.com

FOCUS ON GLOUCESTER

IT'S BEEN A TRICKY PERIOD, THAT IS FOR SURE. THERE HAS BEEN NOTHING EASY ABOUT GLOUCESTER'S START TO 2008 AS HEINEKEN CUP MATCHES HAVE BEEN FOLLOWED BY PREMIERSHIP COLLISIONS AGAINST BATH, WASPS AND LEICESTER.

And their task does not get any easier this afternoon with another west country derby on the horizon. As trips go, Gloucester have found the Memorial Stadium a fruitful hunting ground in recent seasons - last year's defeat apart - but this is sure to be another full metal jacket occasion between two very good sides.



RYAN LAMB

We are now slowly reaching the tipping point of the season. Gloucester's Heineken Cup quarter-final against Munster is already secured and although they lost to Leicester last weekend, they still top the Premiership.

Despite a 10-5 defeat away to Bath at the Rec, Dean Ryan's side have lost only three times domestically this season and ended 2007 with a 20-13 success away to Newcastle that was built on their all-round defensive qualities, superior organisation and outstanding scrummage.

Gloucester's young brigade are doing very nicely thank you very much - steadied by the influence of Mike Tindall, the magnificent Peter Buxton and James Simpson-Daniel - they have produced some outstanding rugby so far this term.

Stand-off Ryan Lamb reeled off his third Heineken Cup man of the match performance of the season against Bourgoin before Christmas, Anthony Allen has rediscovered the sort of form that launched him into England's firmament last season and the tried and tested campaigners like Tindall, Iain Balshaw and Simpson-Daniel are running hot - and that is not to mention Lesley Vainikolo - a winger with seven Premiership tries already and now two England caps to his name following his debut against Wales and first start against Italy last weekend.

They have set the pace alongside neighbours Bath, combining some outstanding attacking verve with an additional level of physicality that was missing from them last season and was exposed in the Heineken Cup.

Last season's losing Guinness Premiership finalists made almost the perfect start to the season: five wins from six in the first section of the Premiership. Following their shellacking at Twickenham in May, head coach Ryan moved heaven and earth to strengthen what was already a tremendously gifted squad.

While the likes of the brilliantly precocious Lamb, the rapidly emerging Allen and full-back Olly Morgan had another season under their belts, heavy weights arrived in numbers.

Vainikolo, the try-hunting giant from Bradford was the most high profile arrival and has scored seven times already in Premiership action despite a serious neck injury.

Scotland's Chris Paterson, Wallaby hooker Jeremy Paul and Fiji's Akapusi Oera have all added to the mix. There have been other additions too: Alasdair Strokosch is a tackle-hungry, workaholic back row forward, Leon Lloyd made the switch from Leicester and Andy Titterrell has added versatility and dynamism to the hooking options and with the tried and trusted like Andy Hazell, Olivier Azam and Nick Wood all performing well, Gloucester have enough about them to go all the way again.

Vainikolo announced himself on the Premiership with a debut record five tries at Headingley as Gloucester ran riot in the second half to claim a 49-24 victory with eight tries in all on the opening day of the season.

Gloucester followed that up with a hard-earned victory away to Saracens that put them under greater scrutiny. Although Vainikolo suffered a neck injury, Gloucester



plundered tries from Anthony Allen, Ryan Lamb, Luke Narraway and Olly Morgan to record a 38-31 victory.

It gave them maximum points after two rounds and last week they opened up at Kingsholm with a 29-7 success over neighbours Worcester Warriors.

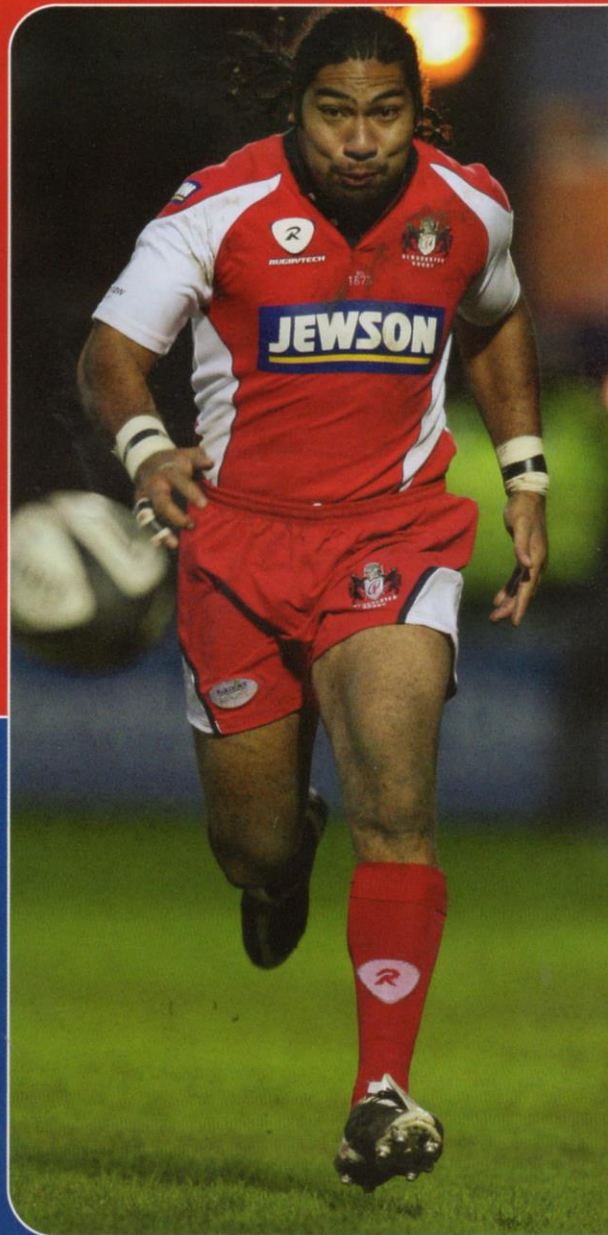
However, it was tougher than the scoreline suggested but thanks to a brilliant individual try from James Simpson-Daniel, a punishing drive and score from hooker Olivier Azam and a returning try from Mike Tindall eased Gloucester to victory in front of almost 16,000 supporters.

A 29-7 win over Leicester at Welford Road and a convincing victory over Sale strengthened their position - before their 15-10 defeat at Irish put the skids under their start.

A draw against today's opponents Newcastle and defeat to Wasps put them out of the EDF Energy Cup but they have responded well with six successive victories - four in the Heineken Cup.

After pasting Ulster all over Ravenhill with the quickest bonus point in the competition's history, Gloucester beat the Ospreys and Bourgoin back-to-back.

In between, they over-turned a potentially fatal half-time deficit to grind out a 27-25 win over Harlequins thanks to two tries from the 'Volcano' and will be hunting more points today. Victories have followed against Bristol 27-0, Newcastle and Wasps - but today is another massive encounter for the Guinness Premiership leaders.



LESLEY VAINIKOLO

Today is the 218th game between the clubs with the first fixture being played at Gloucester on 24th September 1892.

League record against Saracens:

	PLD	WON	DRN	LOST	FOR	AGT
HOME	11	4	1	6	233	240
AWAY	11	3	0	8	155	258
TOTAL	22	7	1	14	388	498

Most points for at home 40 21-04-2002
 Biggest home win 18-9 06-01-2001
 Most points against 41 21-04-2002 & 18-09-2005
 Biggest home loss 9-41 18-09-2005

Most app - Darren Crompton 10+2, Rob Fidler 12+1
 Most points - Mark Tainton 63, Ludovic Mercier 94
 Most tries - 2 by 6 players, James Forrester 5
 Most cons - 6 Felipe Contepomi, Tainton, 15 Mercier
 Most pens - 15 Tainton, 15 Simon Mannix, Mark Mapletoft
 Most DGs - 2 Tainton, 2 Mercier

Photos courtesy of Getty Images

TEAMS

BRISTOL RUGBY VS GLOUCESTER



BRISTOL RUGBY

17.02.08
KICK OFF 3.00PM



GLOUCESTER RUGBY

- 1 DARREN CROMPTON
- 2 SCOTT LINKLATER
- 3 JASON HOBSON
- 4 ROY WINTERS
- 5 SEAN HOHNECK
- 6 MATT SALTER (CAPTAIN)
- 7 JO EL-ABD
- 8 ANDREW BLOWERS
- 9 BRIAN O'RIORDAN
- 10 JASON STRANGE
- 11 DAVID LEMI
- 12 DAVE HILL
- 13 ROB HIGGITT
- 14 LEE ROBINSON
- 15 LUKE ARSCOTT
- 16 MARK REGAN
- 17 ALEX CLARKE
- 18 GARETH LLEWELLYN
- 19 ALFIE TO'OALA
- 20 GRAEME BEVERIDGE
- 21 SAM COX
- 22 JOSH TAUMALOLO

- PROP
- HOOKER
- PROP
- LOCK
- LOCK
- BLINDSIDE
- OPENSIDE
- NO.8
- SCRUM HALF
- FLY HALF
- LEFT WING
- CENTRE
- CENTRE
- RIGHT WING
- FULL BACK
- REPLACEMENT
- REPLACEMENT
- REPLACEMENT
- REPLACEMENT
- REPLACEMENT
- REPLACEMENT
- REPLACEMENT

- NICK WOOD 1
- OLIVIER AZAM 2
- CARLOS NIETO 3
- PETER BUXTON 4
- WILL JAMES 5
- LUKE NARRAWAY 6
- ANDY HAZELL 7
- GARETH DELVE 8
- RORY LAWSON 9
- CHRIS PATERSON 10
- LESLEY VAINIKOLO 11
- ANTHONY ALLEN 12
- JACK ADAMS 13
- JAMES SIMPSON-DANIEL 14
- IAIN BALSHAW 15
- JEREMY PAUL 16
- JACK FORSTER 17
- MARCO BORTOLAMI 18
- ALASDAIR STROKOSCH 19
- GARETH COOPER 20
- WILLIE WALKER 21
- JAMES BAILEY 22

TODAY'S OFFICIALS

Referee - Wayne Barnes Reserve Referee - Tony Spreadbury
Touch Judges - Ashley Reay and Paul Emerson
4th Official - Andy Weymouth TJ Coach - Clive Leeke
Time Keeper - Brian Abrahams

FINAL SCORE

29-26