



The Official Programme  
of Gloucester Rugby



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Heineken Cup Quarter-Final

★ Heineken



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## CAPTAIN'S CORNER

Skipper Marco Bortolami will lead Gloucester against Munster tonight and is relishing the challenge.



THE WAITING is over. Gloucester are ready for one of the biggest games in the club's history.

Today we welcome Munster to Kingsholm in the Heineken Cup and for many of us there has simply never been a bigger occasion in our club rugby lives.

The Heineken Cup is one of the greatest competitions in the world and we are honoured to still be involved alongside some fantastic teams from across Europe.

We come into this game as the leaders of the Guinness Premiership and despite some poor form in the last few weeks or so we are deservedly at the top of the table because we have an outstanding side and are able to compete against the very best and that is what we are up against today.

As with any side we are constantly growing and changing and we must adapt our gameplan and continue to improve. I could not think of a more suitable examination of our progress than meeting Munster. They never fail to reach the knockout stages of the competition, have a collection of players

that would be the envy of most sides and know what it is like to contest these matches.

They came out of one of the toughest pool possible and we will need to be at our very best to beat them.

But this is Kingsholm – our home and our supporters and we won our right to play the game here. The interest and scrutiny in this game has been massive for weeks and we know the majority of the 16,500 supporters inside the ground this afternoon will be Gloucester fans.

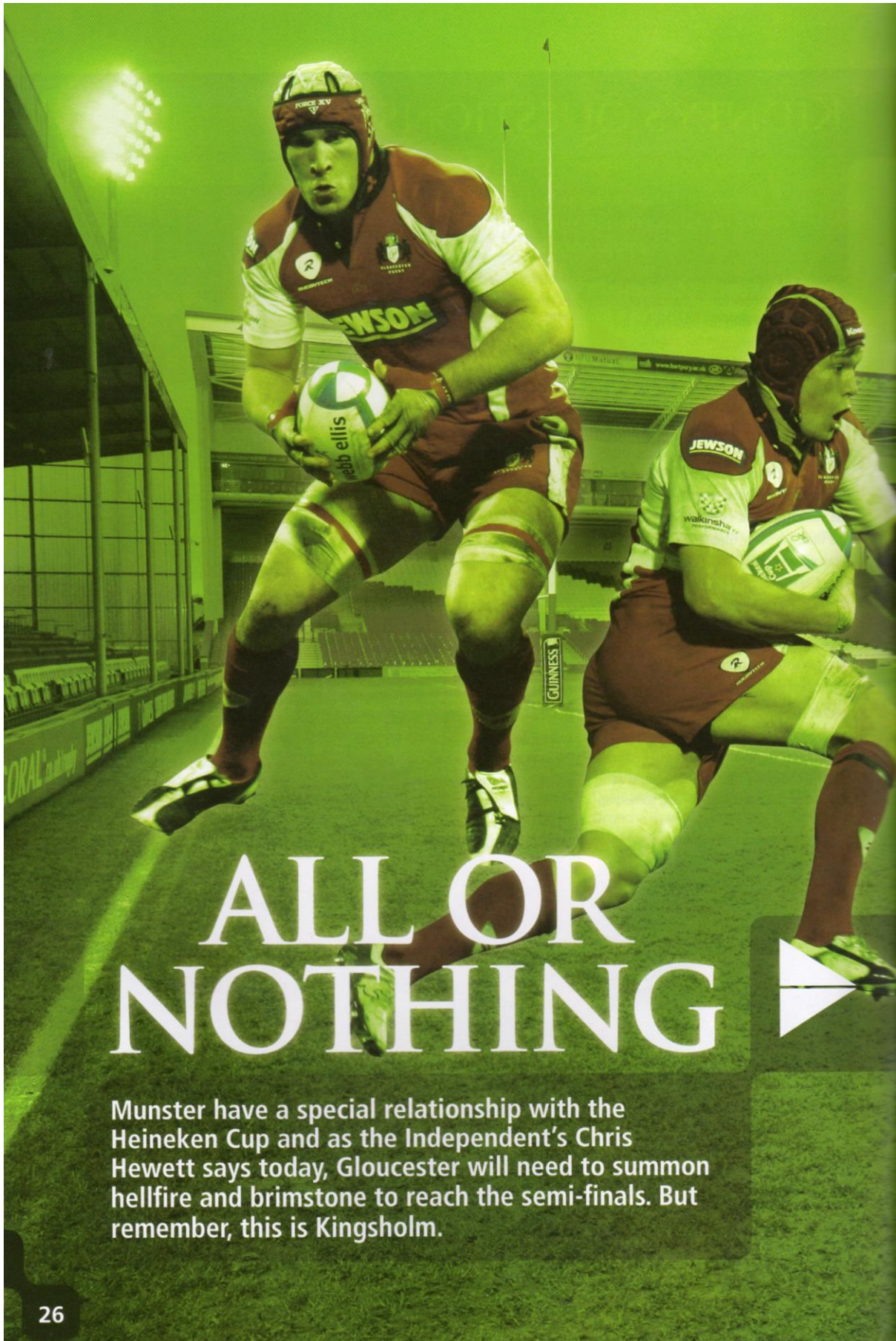
We are ready. This is a very special occasion for us as players and we want all the supporters to play their part, get right behind the team and create that unique atmosphere that may make all the difference.

Enjoy the game – and please get right behind us today.



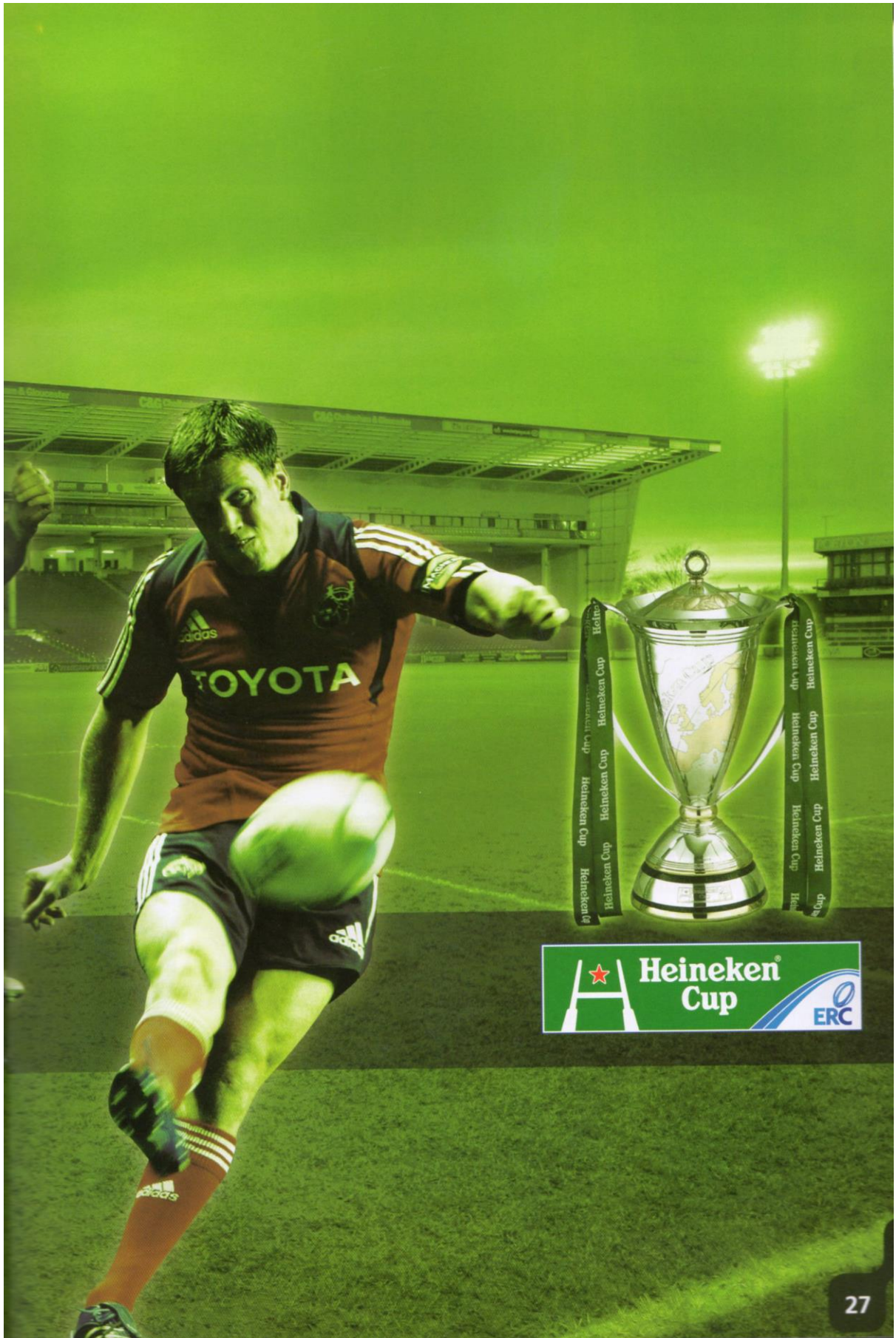
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# ALL OR NOTHING

Munster have a special relationship with the Heineken Cup and as the Independent's Chris Hewett says today, Gloucester will need to summon hellfire and brimstone to reach the semi-finals. But remember, this is Kingsholm.



 **Heineken<sup>®</sup>  
Cup** 

## ALL OR NOTHING

▶ IF THERE is a God up there somewhere, and he happens to have a Cherry and White streak when it comes to this most divine of his team-game creations, Gloucester will win this evening's Heineken Cup quarter-final with a late drop-goal attempt that sees the ball cannon off the backside of John Hayes - why not? it's plenty big enough - and wobble its way apologetically between the sticks.

There is a precedent for this, as most of us know: back in 2001, the scrum-half Elton Moncrieff bounced a drop off the ample rear end of the Llanelli prop Phil Booth to win an important pool game 28-27. Oh, the cheek of it.

It is widely assumed that Gloucester will need a stroke of luck today to emulate their 2001 performance and reach the last four of this most enthralling of competitions. (To digress for a second: there is no longer even a smidgen of doubt that the Heineken Cup is twice as gripping as any international tournament and a squillion times better than the Super 14, with its weekly diet of dead-as-a-dodo fixtures and its pitiful attempts to make sense of the experimental law variations imposed on it by the men in grey suits - or rather, the grey men in grey suits).

Ireland may have made a complete sow's ear of the Six Nations Championship, but Munster are not Ireland. In terms of rugby's intangibles - guts and determination and attitude and fury - they are better than Ireland, and have been for years.

They cannot reasonably be described as the greatest of European campaigners: their one victory, in 2006, does not compare favourably with the three titles secured by Toulouse, or the back-to-back triumphs of Leicester in the early years of this decade, or the two memorable underdog uprisings staged by Wasps in 2004 and 2007. But the sheer depth of their Heineken Cup desire marks them out as something special.

Munster nights are always memorable, irrespective of whether they take place over there at Thomond Park or at some place over here.

It may be a case of the imagination playing tricks, but it often seems that Donncha O'Callaghan and Paul O'Connell are more implacable in the red of their province than in the green of their country; that the back-rowers - the Denis Leamys, the Alan Quinlans - are more ferociously competitive; that Ronan O'Gara, proud owner of the best kicking game in the whole of rugby, is more punishingly accurate when this particular tournament is at the top of his agenda. And they are all the craftier when Declan Kidney is behind the scenes, plotting the moves and pulling the strings. Declan may have upset a

**Gloucester can win this game, certainly. Ryan's squad is the envy of many a Premiership side - any coach who can perm three back-rowers from Peter Buxton, Alasdair Strokosch, Andy Hazell, Akapusi Qera, Luke Narraway and Gareth Delve is laughing sandbags, as they say in these parts.**

few Irish Rugby Football Union types down the years, but he knows how to negotiate the highways and byways of a Heineken Cup campaign.

Not that Gloucester are completely ignorant in the ways of this uniquely partisan world. Twice, they have repulsed the Munster hordes at Kingsholm, much to the disbelief of the travelling men of Limerick in the crowd and those of their brethren who undertook the trips without tickets and watched events unfold, blow by blow, over a gallon of Guinness in the pubs over the road. But on both occasions, the West Countrymen paid for their effrontery. In 2003, they found themselves on the painful end of a 33-6 beating at Thomond - a match awarded an honoured place in Munster's rich history. A year later, they copped it again, losing 35-14 and conceding top spot in the group.

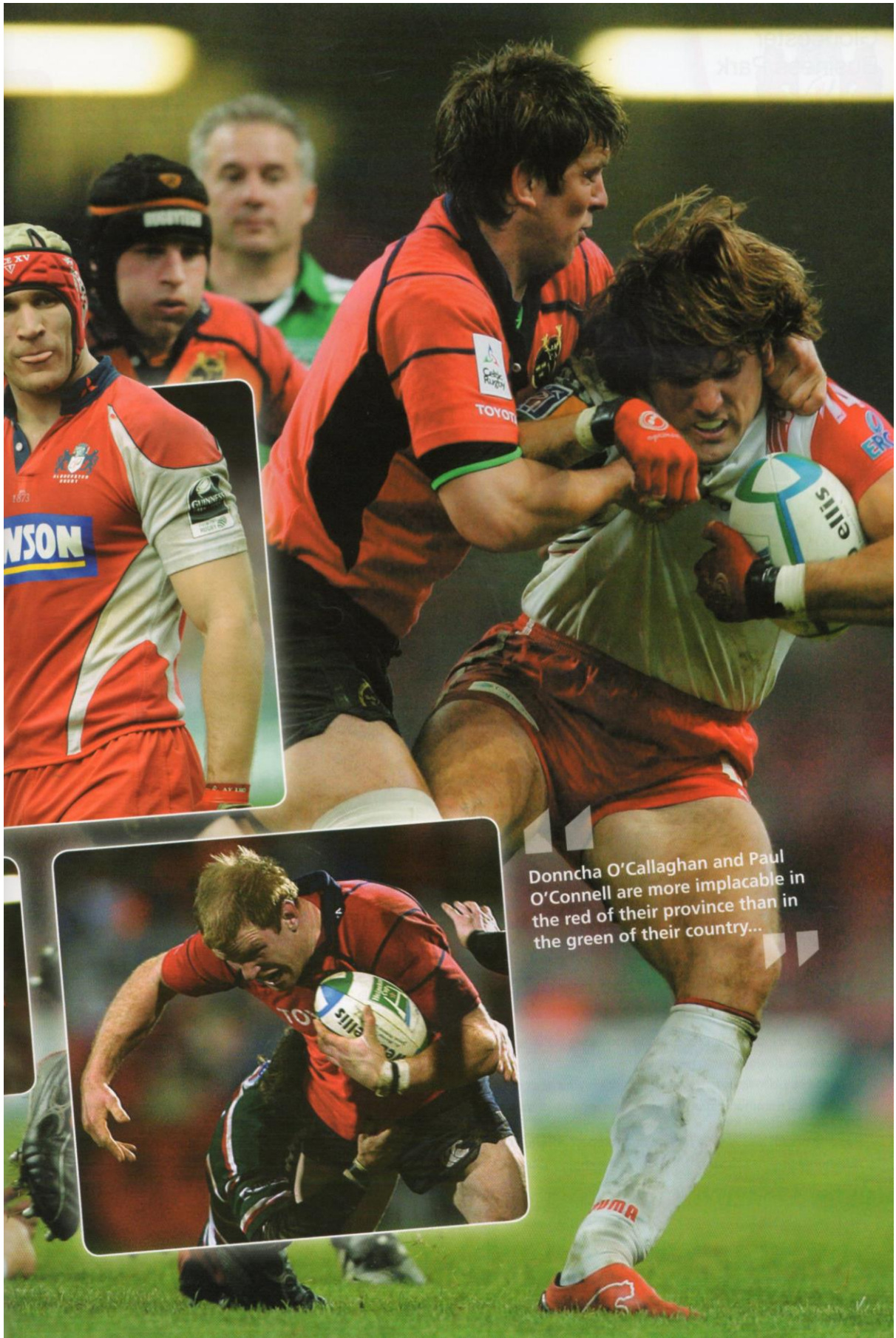
And Dean Ryan knows full well that when

he sends his side out today, the demands of the contest will have more in common with those away fixtures than with either of the home games. Why? Because this is knock-out rugby, and when faced with a win-or-bust situation, Munster tend not to give a tinker's cuss where the match is being played.

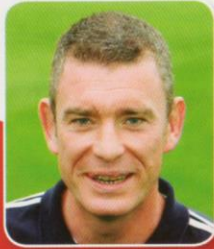
Since 1998-99, the first season in which they declared serious intent on the European stage, they have won in Castres and Bourgoin; they have beaten Toulouse in a semi-final in Bordeaux; they have overcome a vintage Saracens side at Vicarage Road and prevailed over Leicester in their own tiger-striped lair.

Gloucester can win this game, certainly. Ryan's squad is the envy of many a Premiership side - any coach who can perm three back-rowers from Peter Buxton, Alasdair Strokosch, Andy Hazell, Akapusi Qera, Luke Narraway and Gareth Delve is laughing sandbags, as they say in these parts - and the loose-forward supply is far from the only area of strength. But there have been times this season, most notably at Bristol a few weeks back, when the Kingsholmmites have failed to summon the hellfire and brimstone. Munster never fail to summon it under circumstances such as these. It is an all or nothing day.





Donncha O'Callaghan and Paul O'Connell are more implacable in the red of their province than in the green of their country...



# RYAN'S REVIEW

Despite defeat at Sixways last week Head Coach Dean Ryan is fully focused on Munster today.



*It has been a busy few weeks – what were your thoughts following the London Irish and Sale matches?*

**DR:** IN MANY ways we didn't have a great deal to lose against London Irish because we were literally down to our last available options in some pretty key areas.

We let a pretty good position get away from us in the match before against Harlequins because we essentially didn't manage the game as well as we should have done and lost a very advantageous position. I wanted to see some sort of reaction against Irish – we had to come out and scrap for everything, play a fairly minimal game because of international call-ups and injuries and hope for a bit of luck.

We got all three and some of the guys who came in – Dan Tuohy, Jack Forster – guys like that – did exceptionally well. We always knew these guys had the potential

but they had not been exposed to that level of competition before and I think it says a great deal about the squad we are building that they were able to do that.

To get a bonus point was probably unexpected considering our position but it set us up for another very tough game away to Sale. To see the likes of Charlie Sharples and Henry Trinder up against the likes of Charlie Hodgson and Luke McAlister and perform with so much credit was also very satisfying.

A bonus point away to Sale, achieved

like it was, was a great statement for us. It are these points, won under pressure and against the odds, really make the difference at the end of the season.



*Despite the points, defeat at Worcester on Saturday was the sixth away in a row. How did it happen?*

**DR:** I SAID immediately afterwards that we left the game open for us to get mugged and that is exactly what happened. Worcester got ahead early on with a couple of tries but after the first



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Action v Sale



Ronan O'Gara

25 minutes I thought we dominated but didn't put the game away.

That came down to our management of the conditions and situation and we didn't do it well enough. I am sure that had we scored again at the start of the second half we would have gone on to win the game but it didn't happen. There was very little rugby that could be played in those circumstances and in those conditions but we should have won.

**Today is all about Europe. How would you assess Munster's challenge?**

**DR:** THIS IS where you want to be as a player and a coach because there is no bigger test than facing a former winner of the competition.

The Heineken Cup is capable of doing unique things to individuals and teams and we are up against a side who have a special relationship with this competition and we want to get to the levels they have attained in the past.

They've probably the best game manager in world rugby in Ronan O'Gara at 10. His ability to keep a side in the right areas of the field is very, very good. They've got a fantastic offensive line-out if O'Gara puts them in the right area of the field. If you buckle under that, you're in trouble. If you can hold that and stay at parity, then I think you can play against them, but a lot of sides have buckled under that sort of pressure if they keep you in their own 22.

We've got to respond to the pressure. If we can, then I think we can get a game out of the bag which can trouble them.

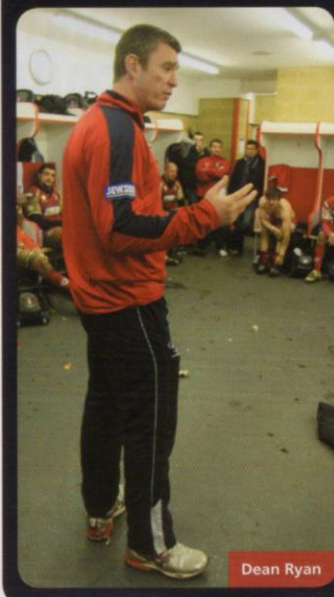
We don't have the same consistency of performance as they do. And they'll be able to turn up at Kingsholm and perform. Munster will not be fazed by the venue. For us, home advantage gives us a little bit more of a lift - it gives us more confidence and maybe could be the margin that works for us on the day.

Kingsholm is a special place and we need that sort of atmosphere to really come out tonight.

“ We got all three and some of the guys who came in – Dan Tuohy, Jack Forster – guys like that – did exceptionally well. ”



Dan Tuohy



Dean Ryan



# TODAY'S TEAMS

Saturday 5th April 2008 17.30

Gloucester Rugby  
v Munster Rugby



**Gloucester RUGBY**  **3**

 **Munster RUGBY** **16**

	Olly MORGAN	15	Full Back	15	Shaun PAYNE	
	Chris PATERSON	14	Right Wing	14	Doug HOWLETT	
	James SIMPSON-DANIEL	13	Centre	13	Rua TIPOKI	
	Anthony ALLEN	12	Centre	12	Lifeimi MAFI	
	Lesley VAINIKOLO	11	Left Wing	11	Ian DOWLING	
	Ryan LAMB	10	Fly Half	10	Ronan O'GARA	
	Rory LAWSON	9	Scrum Half	9	Peter STRINGER	
	Nick WOOD	1	Prop	1	Marcus HORAN	
	Andy TITTERRELL	2	Hooker	2	Jerry FLANNERY	
	Carlos NIETO	3	Prop	3	John HAYES	
	Marco BORTOLAMI ©	4	Lock	4	Donncha O'CALLAGHAN	
	Alex BROWN	5	Lock	5	Paul O'CONNELL ©	
	Peter BUXTON	6	Flanker	6	Alan QUINLAN	
	Andy HAZELL	7	Flanker	7	David WALLACE	
	Luke NARRAWAY	8	No 8	8	Anthony FOLEY	

## Replacements

	Jeremy PAUL	16		16	Frankie SHEAHAN	
	Alasdair DICKINSON	17		17	Tony BUCKLEY	
	Will JAMES	18		18	Mick O'DRISCOLL	
	Gareth DELVE	19		19	Denis LEAMY	
	Gareth COOPER	20		20	Tomas O'LEARY	
	Willie WALKER	21		21	Paul WARWICK	
	Mike TINDALL	22		22	Kieran LEWIS	

Heineken Cup

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# SPOTLIGHT

with **Andy Titterrell**

by Ian Randall



## WHAT'S THE MOTTO YOU LIVE BY?

You reap what you sow. You take each day as it comes, face what obstacles you have and being a strong person will get you through.

## WHAT IS YOUR MOST PRIZED POSSESSION?

Probably my family. I'm not very materialistic, so I'm quite happy with what I've got.

## WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE BREAKFAST CEREAL?

A protein shake with egg white and water. I don't really eat cereal. I will have porridge now and again but two hours later I'm starving again.



## WHICH COMPANY WOULD BE YOUR IDEAL SPONSOR?

I'm very much into my food, especially red meat, so I'd try and find a butcher to do it!



## ARE YOU A SPENDER OR A SAVER?

I'm a saver, but somehow all my money gets spent. I think it's because my wife and I have had a baby recently, but as long as my family are well looked after that's all that matters.

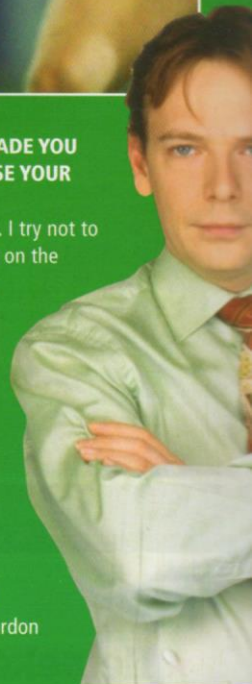


## WHAT MADE YOU LAST LOSE YOUR TEMPER?

I couldn't tell you. I try not to scream and shout on the pitch or at home.

## WHO IS YOUR FAVOURITE PERSON ON TV?

Can I have a character? Ian Beale out of EastEnders. My wife and I can't help but laugh at him. I also like Gordon





Ramsay, whether it's his Kitchen Nightmares or a genuine cooking programme because he's fun to watch.



**WHICH TV SHOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE A CONTESTANT ON AND WHY?**

Ready Steady Cook or Come Dine with Me on Channel 4, so they can all taste something I've cooked and slate me for it!

**WHO IS THE MOST INTERESTING PERSON YOU'VE EVER MET ?**

God. I became a Christian about two and a half years ago, and it's been the best thing for me. When I got married we had a blessing and after that I did the Alpha course with the pastor who blessed us. I realised then there was so much more to my life than playing rugby.

**IF YOU WENT TO UNIVERSITY, WHICH DEGREE WOULD YOU DO?**

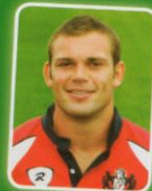
I'm currently doing a home study fitness and conditioning course because I want to get into that when I've finished my rugby career. I'm trying to put some foundations down now so I can tap a few people to guide me in the right direction.

**WHAT PART OF TRAINING DO YOU ENJOY MOST ?**

The conditioning and my throwing training that I do. The England throwing coach comes to see me, and we'll work on the throw anywhere between 5 metres and 17 metres. He'll give me a target to hit and nine times out of ten it does. If it didn't I'd be out of a job.

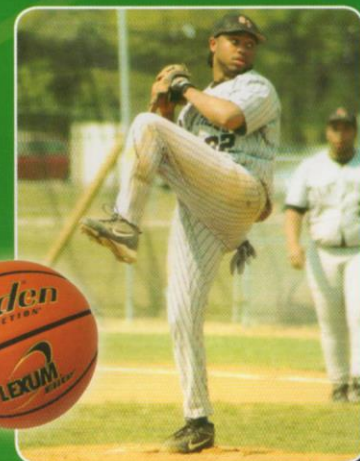
**IF THERE IS A PRANK BEING PLAYED, WHO IS USUALLY THE CULPRIT ?**

Thankfully I've not been on the end of any, but from what I've seen it's Andy Hazell. Whenever there is a prank, he's the one who everyone blames because he's got a reputation for it.



**WHICH OTHER SPORTING EVENT WOULD YOU LOVE A TICKET FOR?**

Probably something in the States. Sport is so big over there and you've got the choice of Basketball, Baseball and the NFL.



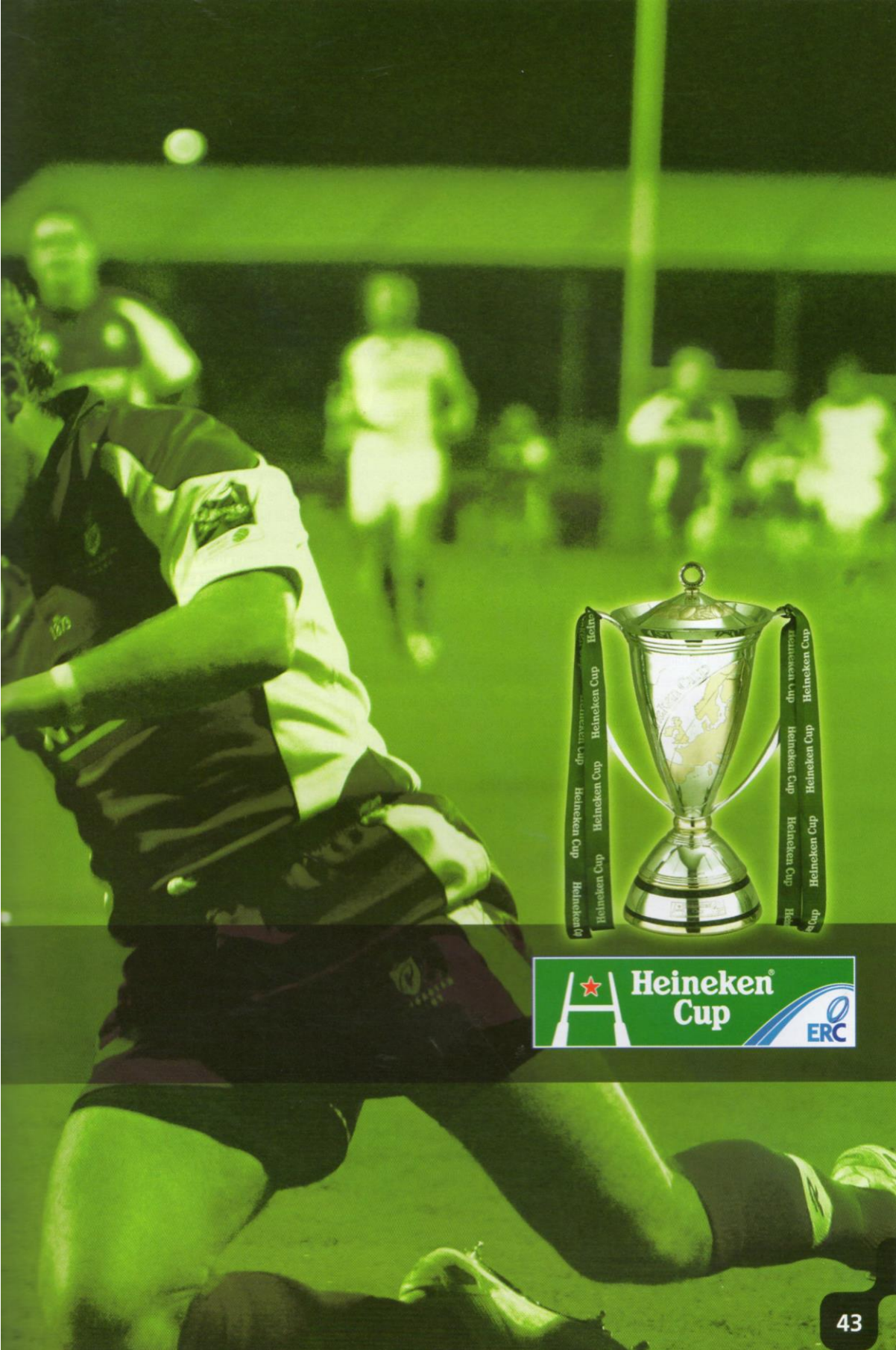


# MAIN MAN



He is one of the most dangerous outside backs in the country and will play a key role tonight – can James Simpson-Daniel maintain his outstanding form against Munster?





## MAIN MAN

IF THOSE Gloucester supporters, who will sardine themselves inside Kingsholm tonight, could handpick an individual to deliver a potentially fatal knockout blow to Munster's Heineken Cup hopes then they are likely to look no further than James Simpson-Daniel.

Those regular watchers of all things Gloucester will know better than most that Simpson-Daniel is capable of salvaging almost anything all on his tod. Witness his two-try rescue mission against Newcastle in the EDF Energy Cup, his decisive try against those mayhem makers the Ospreys in this very competition and his single-handed recovery mission against Newcastle in the Guinness Premiership in February.

Although the man himself would not be the first to talk up his form, it has been generally regarded that if a pass needs picking out, a defensive structure requires slicing open or a try is desperate to be scored then 'Sinbad' has delivered this season.

Which conveniently brings us to today's little matter of Munster – the giant red machine from across the Irish sea who make it their business to fight tooth and claw at the business end of the Heineken Cup.

"I suppose in some ways this is a one-off game," Simpson-Daniel said. "We know they will be extremely tough to beat but there is a lot of respect for both sides and if we are slight underdogs then it shouldn't really matter.

"On so many different levels this is a massive game for the club and from a playing perspective we know what we are capable of and we have to pull out all the stops to achieve our goals. I think we all appreciate that Munster are capable of amazing things in the Heineken Cup because they are one of the best sides but at the same time we have a very solid group of players and we believe in our ability."

Simpson-Daniel's career is, in some ways, one of the great mysteries of the modern game. Widely regarded as one of the finest game-breakers of his generation thanks to all-encompassing skill set, he has been restricted to only 10 England caps since his debut in 2002 due to a combination of injuries and illness.

But he has a better understanding of his situation now than he ever has and has knuckled down effectively this season. He has scored 11 times in 22 appearances in all competitions – including three in the Heineken Cup.

So what is he expecting tonight when the former champions come to Kingsholm for the third time searching for their first away win over Gloucester?

**Everything needs to be spot on because the pressure will be so great – all the little things have to come together – but this is a game that means so much to the club. We are all massively looking forward to it. We want to come off the pitch with a good feeling – it is up to us to go and earn it.**

"I think the key with them is that they are capable of winning wherever they go," he said. "Tactically, they are very astute, very clever, and when they put that jersey on it means something very special to them.

"You need things to go well for you because the margins are so fine in these games and that is something we have talked about. It is up to us to make things go wrong for them by producing a performance we all know we are capable of.

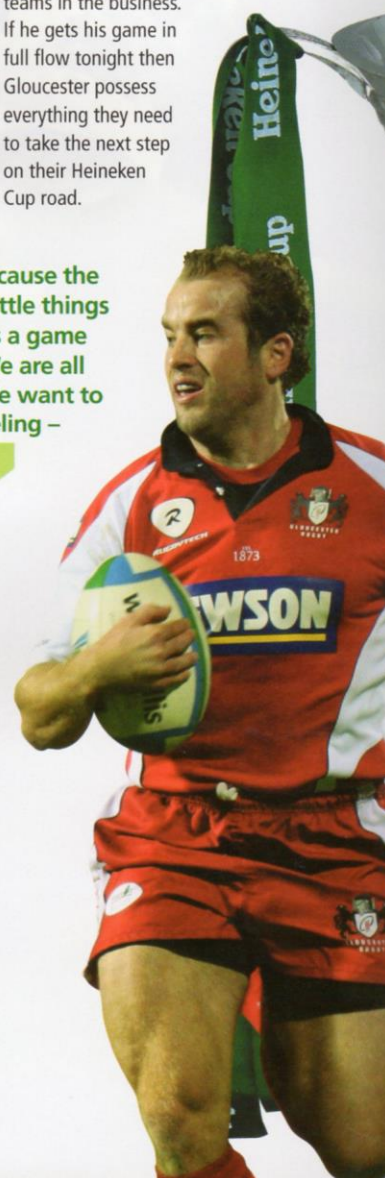
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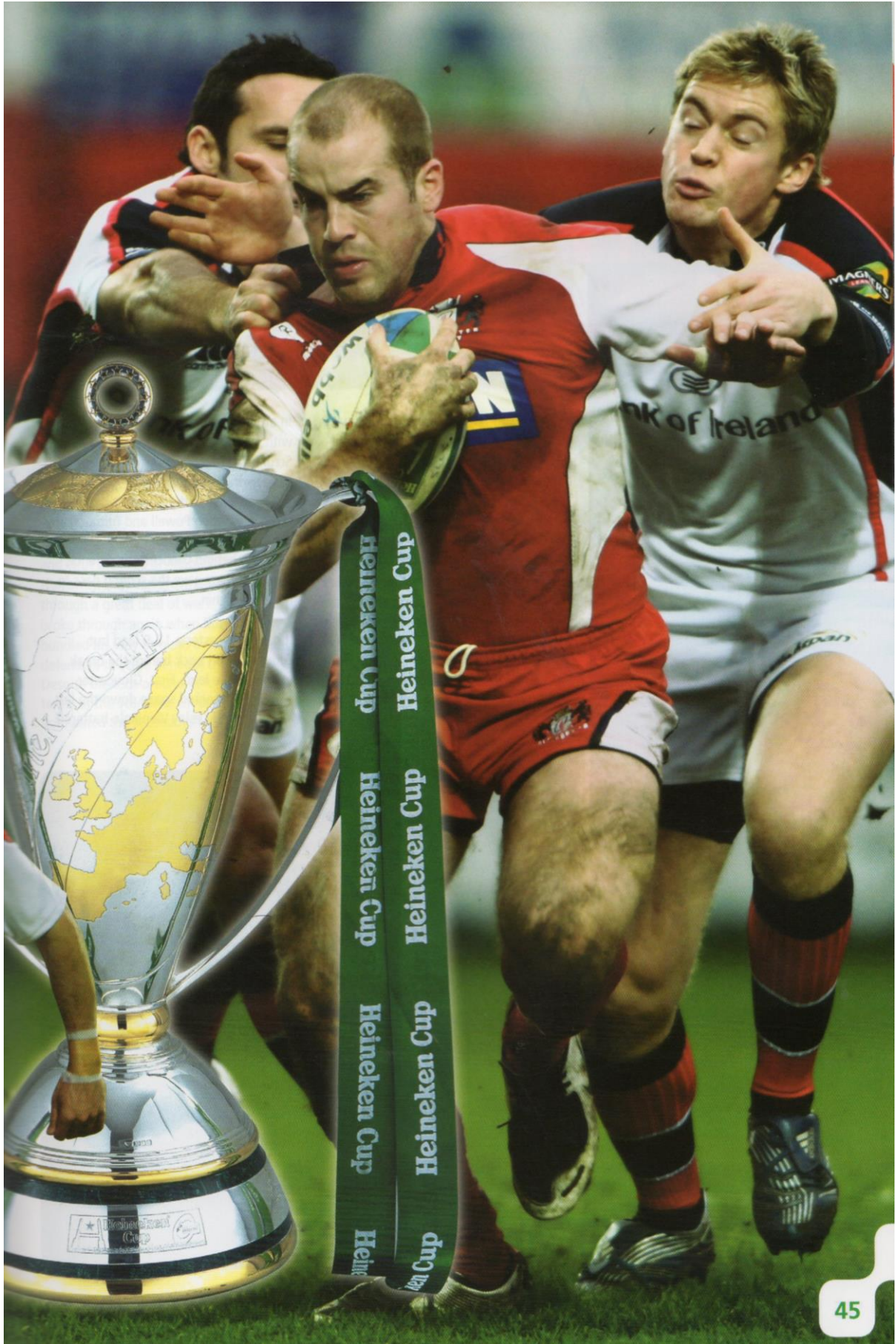
"We want to come off the pitch with a good

feeling – it is up to us to go and earn it."

Gloucester's form is at best patchy. They have lost their last six away games in the Guinness Premiership and although they have gathered bonus points to maintain their lead at the head of the Guinness Premiership there will be nothing for the loser tonight.

But they have at their core players like Simpson-Daniel who can shred the best teams in the business. If he gets his game in full flow tonight then Gloucester possess everything they need to take the next step on their Heineken Cup road.





# MATCH ACTION

Gloucester Rugby  
Worcester Warriors

14  
17



## Time line

2 mins		
Tuitupou TRY, Drahm CON,		7-0
22 mins		
Benjamin TRY,		12-0
32 mins		
Vainikolo TRY, Lamb CON		12-7
40 mins		
Lawson TRY, Lamb CON		12-14
80 mins		
Delport TRY		17-14

## Worcester Snatch It!

Saturday, March 29, Attendance: 10,197  
Sixways, Referee: Sean Davey

▶ FORMER Gloucester star Thinus Delport broke the hearts of his former employers with a last minute try at Sixways.

The full-back slid home to score on the left with 49 seconds remaining to hand the Warriors their first Guinness Premiership victory over the Kingsholm side in seven attempts.

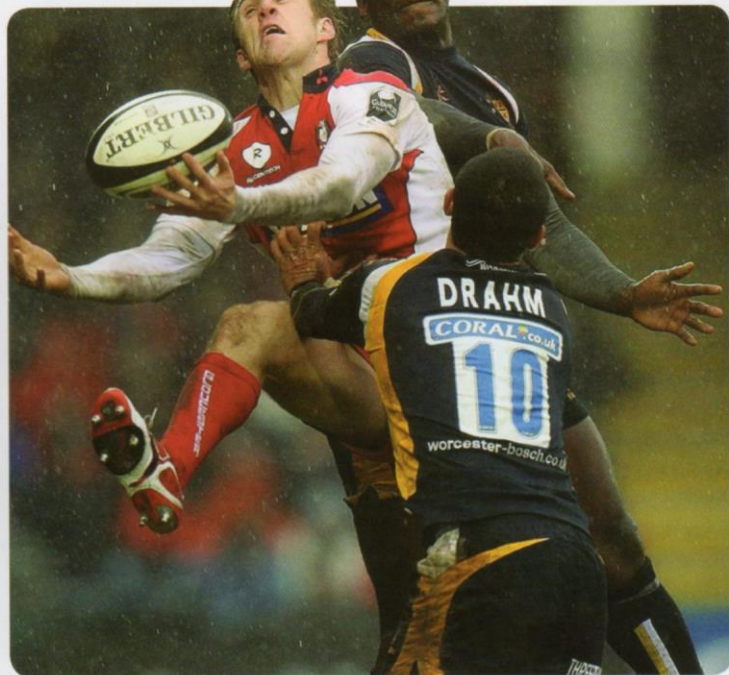
It was Gloucester's sixth away defeat in a row and completed a famous smash and grab raid by Worcester – who trailed throughout the second half as Gloucester dominated both territory and possession but could not score.

In atrocious conditions, Worcester started with a bang – scoring after only a minute. Scrum-half Matt Powell and flanker Pat Sanderson sustained a move before Sam Tuitupou sped to the posts for the opening score. And when Powell and Tuitupou combined again in midfield and Delport kicked in behind Gloucester's defence, Marcel Garvey gave the scoring pass to Miles Benjamin.

It gave Worcester a 12-0 lead but Gloucester hit back before the break to snatch the lead. First, Gloucester engineered space down the left and Lesley Vainikolo battered

## Gloucester Line-up

15	Olly Morgan	
14	Iain Balshaw	
13	James Simpson-Daniel	
12	Anthony Allen	
11	Lesley Vainikolo	(1t)
10	Ryan Lamb	(2c)
9	Rory Lawson	(1t)
1	Nick Wood	
2	Andy Titterrell	
3	Carlos Nieto	
4	Marco Bortolami	(capt)
5	Alex Brown	
6	Alasdair Strokosch	
7	Akapusi Qera	
8	Luke Narraway	
REPS		
16	Jeremy Paul	
17	Alasdair Dickinson	
18	Will James	
19	Gareth Delve	(Strokosch)
20	Gareth Cooper	(Lawson)
21	Chris Paterson	(Balshaw)
22	Willie Walker	(Lamb)



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his way through Delpont and then Garvey to score his eighth try of the season. Garvey bore the full brunt of the challenge and was carried off to be replaced by Rico Gear.

The momentum was now with Gloucester and with the likes of Akapusi Qera, Luke Narraway and Alex Brown all getting through a great deal of work, Gloucester broke through again when Rory Lawson bundled his way through a thicket of defenders to score beneath the sticks. Despite the turn-around in fortunes in terms of the scoreline, Gloucester also dominated the second half but could

not make their dominance count on the scoreboard. They dominated territory and possession to a large extent but failed to manage the game well enough to leave themselves open to Worcester's smash and grab.

That came in the last minute when Shane Drahm kicked cross field, Tuitupou gathered on the bounce and kicked in behind Simpson-Daniel. Gloucester were forced to concede a close range scrummage and when the third one broke up, the Warriors took play down the short side and Delpont dive home to seal a famous Worcester win.



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## Man of the Match

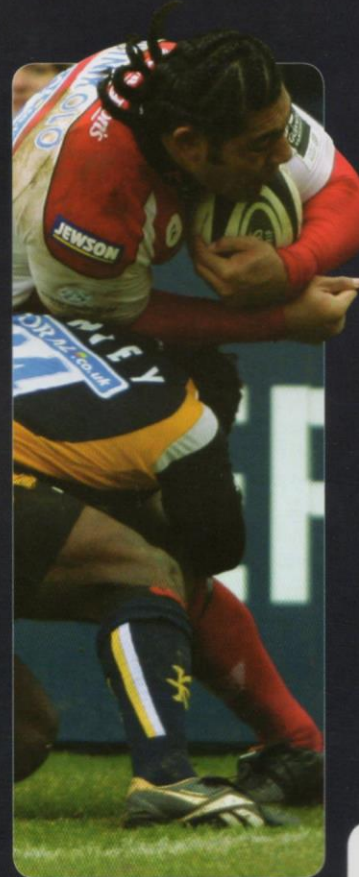


Akapusi Qera got through plenty of work for Gloucester.

## Coach's Comment



"We didn't manage the game well enough in the second half and left them an opportunity to mug us." head coach Dean Ryan.



# LEADERSHIP WILL BE KEY

In an exclusive interview, Sky commentator Miles Harrison believes the team with the most leaders will win today – and picks out two potential match winners in James Simpson-Daniel and Ronan O’Gara.



▶ THE QUARTER-FINAL stage of the Heineken Cup is one of the weekends of the rugby season, with supporters of those involved thinking of very little else since the pools were decided all those weeks ago.

Now, stomachs will be spinning like washing machines in the dressing-rooms and those inner churnings will be reflected in the stands at Kingsholm, the Madejski, Vicarage Road and Le Stadium. But, this weekend is not only a time for nervousness; it is a time for leadership too and the sides with the most ‘leaders’ on the field will be the ones to triumph.

It could be that the British and Irish Lions will recognise Simpson-Daniel’s qualities before England do and, if so, then in South Africa next year ‘JSD’ could be playing alongside one of his opponents today – ‘ROG’. Munster’s Ronan O’Gara is another player with undoubted leadership qualities although in his case these qualities have been far more visible to a wider audience.



O’Gara’s excellent bounce back from World Cup woe was somewhat lost in the tale of a disappointing Six Nations campaign for Ireland where the story was dominated by the



**O’Gara’s excellent bounce back from World Cup woe was somewhat lost in the tale of a disappointing Six Nations campaign for Ireland where the story was dominated by the fate of their coach, Eddie O’Sullivan. Until the final round of matches, O’Gara had been the fly-half of the tournament.**

I was interested to read the recent comments of Gloucester coach, Bryan Redpath, on the emergence of James Simpson-Daniel as one of the leaders in his team. Redpath feels that the ‘naturally quiet’ Simpson-Daniel has developed an important knack of ‘being able to say the right things at the right time’. Well, this is certainly the right time for him to make those leadership statements with the club and provincial season reaching boiling point.

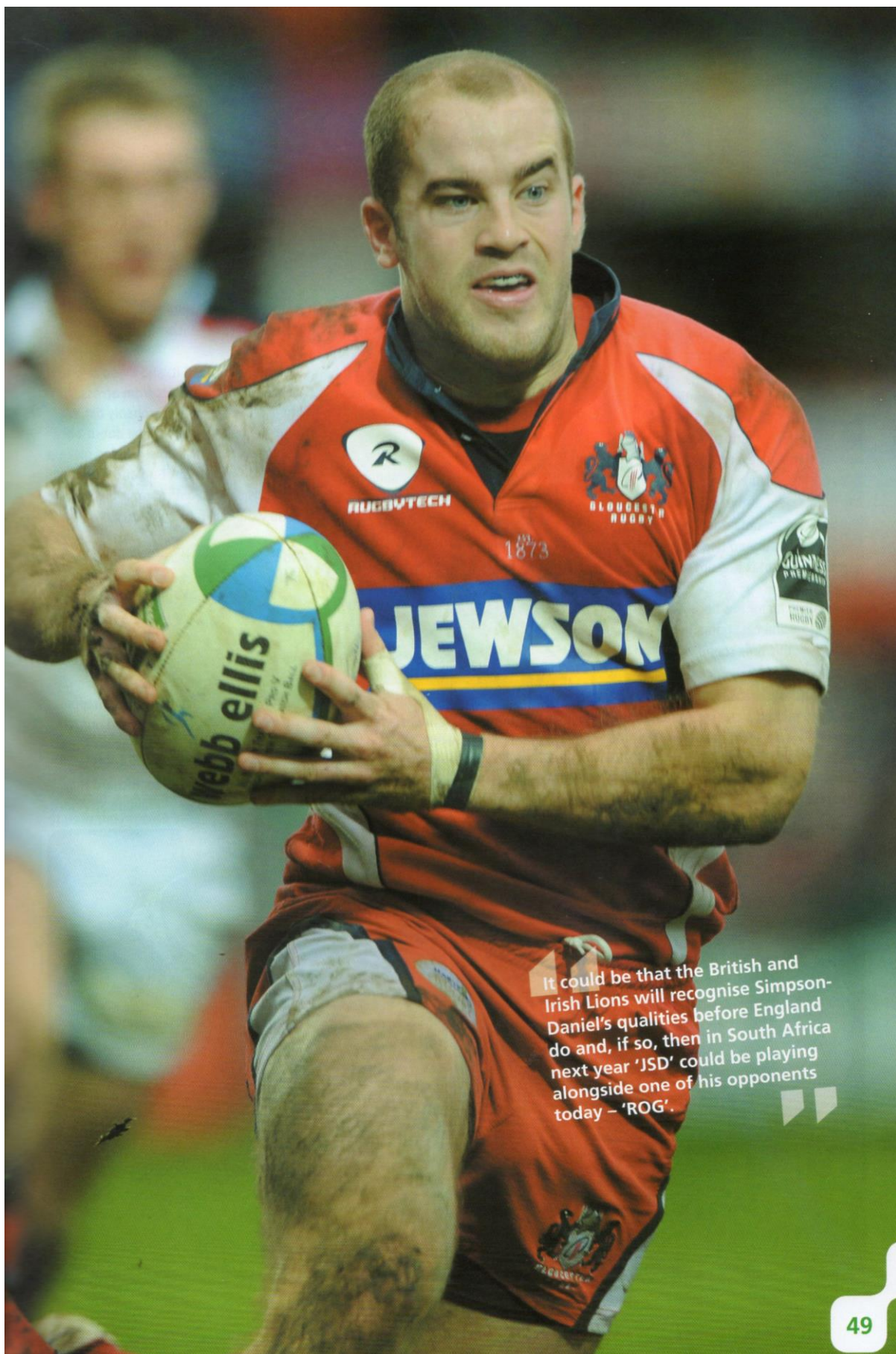
Simpson-Daniel’s international career, after initially causing the mercury to surge, has since been a rather lukewarm affair. However, success for Gloucester over the next few weeks will surely thrust this talented player back into an England picture from which many believe he has been all too hastily air-brushed. Fitness has been an issue for him but form has not and it would be a travesty if the Gloucester back did not get the international platform that his skills clearly deserve.

fate of their coach, Eddie O’Sullivan. Until the final round of matches, O’Gara had been the fly-half of the tournament.

Then, along came a certain Danny Cipriani to upstage the Munsterman at Twickenham. With twenty year old Cipriani running hot and young James Hook of Wales not too shabby either, a year of further growth for these two is going to make the fight for the Lions’ fly-half jersey a fearsome one. But, O’Gara will be up for that fight too, especially as, for the Lions, he has unfinished business - he was scandalously ‘worked-over’ in 2001 and then wrongly ‘passed-over’ in 2005.

Today at Kingsholm is all about one thing though – not international recognition for this summer or indeed the next but about winning a place in this month’s European semi-final. Which of these two ‘leaders’ will help their team there?





It could be that the British and Irish Lions will recognise Simpson-Daniel's qualities before England do and, if so, then in South Africa next year 'JSD' could be playing alongside one of his opponents today - 'ROG'.



# PETER ARNOLD

Peter Arnold returns with a warning to the international game – club rugby is catching up, tells the RFU to keep their hands off Dean Ryan and hopes to see James Forrester back in action soon.

## CRACKING GAME!

THE Six Nations is done and dusted for another year. Thank the Lord.

I've nothing against international matches as such, of course, but the way the season is structured at the moment distorts everything to a surely unacceptable degree. Sides who don't provide players to the various national squads have an unfair advantage over the others for around two months of the season, and that is just not right.

But another factor has become apparent this season. The best game I've seen on the box this time round wasn't an international at all. It was the Leicester v Wasps EDF Cup semi-final. If you didn't see it you missed a cracker. Although the scoreline would seem to suggest that the Tigers walked it, in fact, they couldn't feel safe until the very last knockings. Generally speaking, the standard of

rugby played was higher than anything I saw at Twickenham or Murrayfield, and although Wales obviously served up some good stuff, they didn't do it for the sustained periods which Leicester v Wasps offered us.

A few weeks ago I wondered if the perceived gap between the standards of club rugby and the international game was narrowing. Now, I have to say that if the cup semi is anything to go by, the Premiership has already overtaken the international scene and is galloping down the home straight, if you'll pardon the mixed metaphor.

## HANDS OFF!

WHICH brings us neatly to Jeff Probyn's latest foot-in-mouth. Jeff was a fair old prop forward in his day, and, I gather, now sits on one of the multifarious RFU committees, but that doesn't give him the right to

try and half-inch our head coach into the ivory towers of Twickenham.

In case you missed it, and if you're one of our welcome visitors from across the Irish Sea then you probably did, Mr Probyn has declared that he doesn't like the idea of Martin Johnson being given a role in the England set-up and that Dean Richards of Harlequins or our own Dean Ryan would be a better choice.

No doubt he's right in principle but I imagine that Harlequins supporters' reaction will be the same as mine. Succinctly, keep your thieving hands off.

If we, the supporters, have anything to do with anything, it simply ain't going to happen. We've had our traumas over the last decade or so. Richard Hill, Philippe St. Andre



EDF Cup Semi-Final action



Dean Ryan



James Forrester takes a break from the action

and Nigel Melville all started well, but were never able really to kick on after the honeymoon period. Dean Ryan has done that, and won the respect of all of us in the process. We certainly don't want to lose him at this tricky point in the side's progress.

Anyway, you can't ignore the personality factor. I admire DR's talents as much as anyone does, but I can't see his down-to-earth, forthright, even at times abrasive, style going down very well in the rarefied atmosphere of Twickenham. It would be like drafting Attila the Hun on to the management body of the Royal Ballet.

Perhaps a dose of the DR style is exactly what the RFU needs. So be it – but not at our expense, please.

### BACK FROM THE WARS

WE'RE all over the moon to see that the unique James Forrester is on his way back. Quite simply, there's no one quite like him: he does things that nobody else even thinks of, let alone tries.

He's had his share of injuries during his career, but nothing quite as threatening as this most recent one, which as we all know, has kept him off the field for just about a year. Of course, one must always wonder if he'll be quite the Jango of old because the long term effects of an injury of such severity and duration can't really be assessed until the mind and body are tested in the fires of battle. Some of us remember my old friend Viv Woolley, another tearaway back row man, who burst on the scene and played himself on to the fringes of the England side, but was stopped in his tracks by a very nasty broken leg.

He did come back, and played his heart out, but was never the force he had been before his injury.

Parenthetically, Viv did acquire one claim to fame after his injury. In 1982, after a rigorous selection process which produced as crazy a bunch of head-bangers as Gloucester ever saw, he was appointed captain of the Gloucester team which contested the final 'It's a

Knock-Out' competition on TV. They got to the European Final at Ghent in Belgium, and only just lost out to come second in the pouring rain.

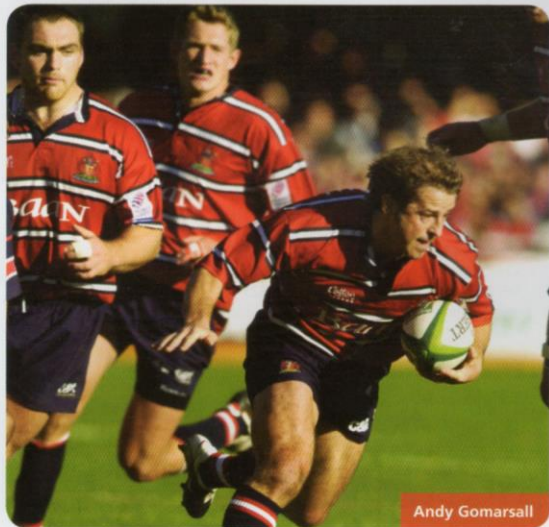
All that's by the way. Treatment and rehabilitation have come a long way since those days, and I'm sure we'll soon see Jango back to his old self, making defenders look silly, as he did to Jonah Lomu in that memorable Barbarians match at Twickenham in which James Simpson Daniel also scored a spectacular try.

Of course, Forrester has to compete in the most crowded area of the Gloucester squad. He has to perform in a select group which includes, Hazell, Buxton, Narraway, Strokosch, Delve and Qera, and I've probably forgotten somebody at that.

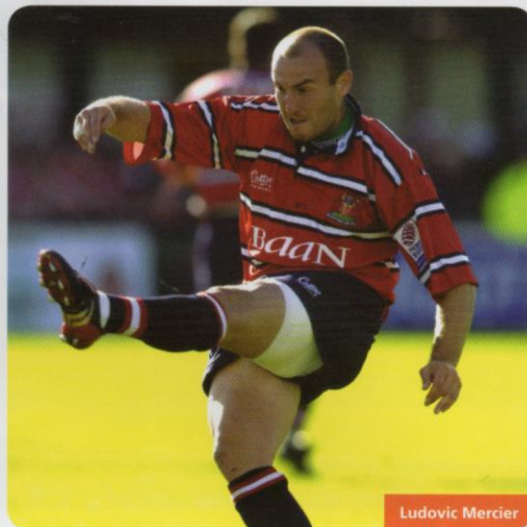
It would be a very unwise man who would bet against him outshining all of them, however. In full flow he adds something different to the side, and I've no doubt he will prove that again next season, if not this.

# MATCH OF THE DAYS

It is a seminal day in Gloucester's recent history – victory over Munster at Kingsholm in 2002 and here Dave King looks back at the occasion in Match of the Days.



Andy Gomarsall



Ludovic Mercier

▶ THEY MAY have only met on four previous occasions but there is already a serious history between Gloucester and Munster.

And while Gloucester have suffered at Thomond Park, Munster have found the going equally as tough at Kingsholm. The first meeting between the teams was on October 12 2002 – a pool match between the two heavyweights who had also been drawn against Viadana and Perpignan.

A crowd of 11,000 gathered at Kingsholm and an air of high expectancy fell upon the city – this was an occasion that would test Gloucester's squad to the fullest. Today, only Olivier Azam, now in a second spell with the club, and the evergreen Peter Buxton are likely to feature for Gloucester from the starting line up that day. James Simpson-Daniel was a used replacement.

In comparison Ronan O'Gara, Peter Stringer, Marcus Horan, John Hayes, Mick O'Driscoll, Anthony Foley and Alan Quinlan still feature regularly for one of

Europe's greatest rugby institutions. Foley with 85 appearances, Hayes 76, Stringer and O'Gara 72, feature in the top five appearance makers in the Heineken Cup.

On that autumn day of six years ago we forced the men from Munster onto the back foot. The opening period of the game was predictable – massively physical and nervy as both teams battled to gain the upper hand. And it was Gloucester who edged ahead with two Ludovic Mercier penalties after 21 and 29 minutes to cancel out one from O'Gara.

And then it happened: A Gloucester score that raised the roof on Kingsholm. Mercier's angled chip sent the fleet footed Marcel Garvey moving and he had the pace to kick away from Mossie Lawlor's tackle and beat Stringer to score. Mercier converted and then added his third penalty of the first half to take Gloucester even further ahead.

It established a lead that would prove crucial. Gloucester were 16-9 ahead at the break and with Andy Gomarsall

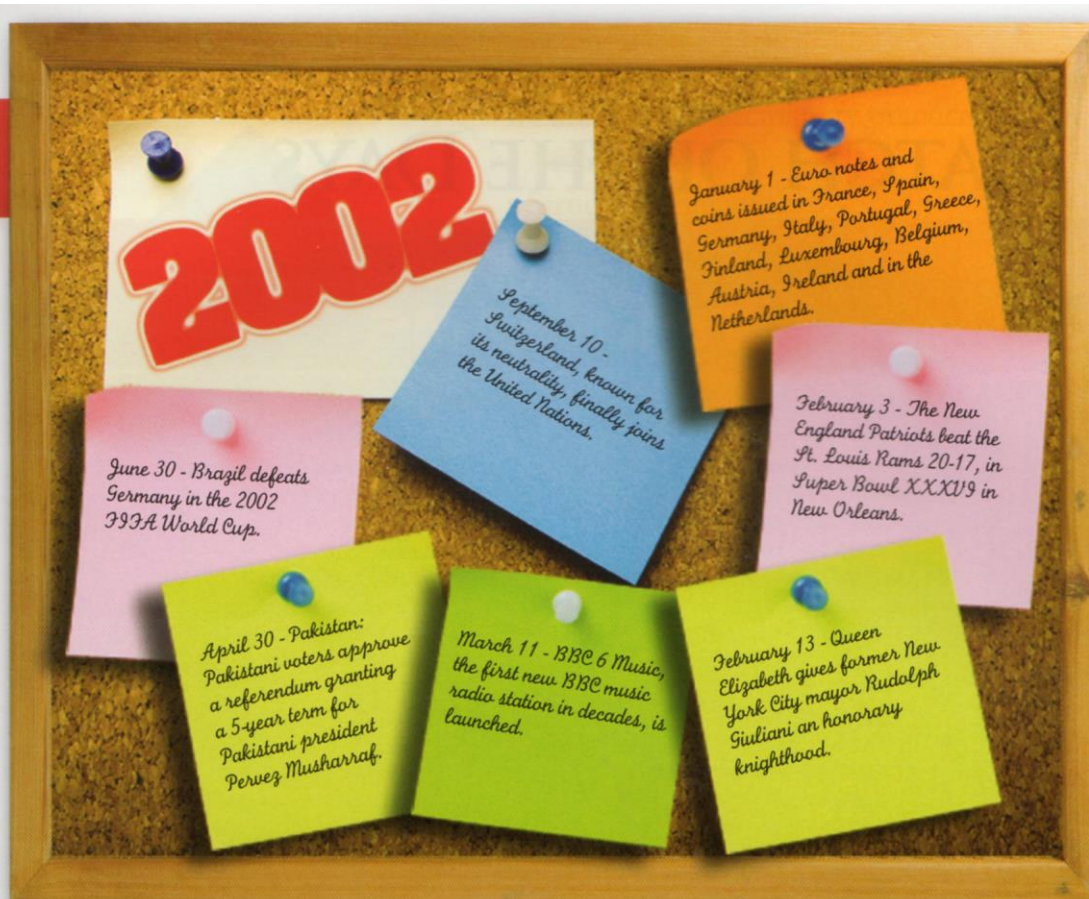
in outstanding form behind a pack of forwards, seemingly possessed, he was at his impish best.

Although Gloucester were missing the talismanic figure of Junior Paramore with a broken jaw, Gloucester's nerves were settled by 21-year-old James Forrester who produced a remarkable performance on non-stop running and foraging to confirm his progress as one of the most talented loose forwards in the country.

Jake Boer was also in great form and he got Gloucester's second try when the home forwards drove the ball over the line and Mercier converted.

The game was Gloucester's for the taking now, and when Peter Buxton charged up the middle he created space for Mercier to score a third try following heavy pressure from a line-out.

With Munster's Frankie Sheahan in the sinbin, Boer scored his second, and Gloucester's fourth try. Once again it came after a close range line-out



**2002**

January 1 - Euro notes and coins issued in France, Spain, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Greece, Finland, Luxembourg, Belgium, Austria, Ireland and in the Netherlands.

September 10 - Switzerland, known for its neutrality, finally joins the United Nations.

June 30 - Brazil defeats Germany in the 2002 FIFA World Cup.

February 3 - The New England Patriots beat the St. Louis Rams 20-17, in Super Bowl XXXVI in New Orleans.

April 30 - Pakistan: Pakistani voters approve a referendum granting a 5-year term for Pakistani president Pervez Musharraf.

March 11 - BBC 6 Music, the first new BBC music radio station in decades, is launched.

February 13 - Queen Elizabeth gives former New York City mayor Rudolph Giuliani an honorary knighthood.



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Henry Paul

to confirm Gloucester's dominance. Stringer's last minute try was immaterial because Gloucester's dominance had been total.

The then Kingsholm supremo Nigel Melville in a retrospective mood recalled: "We had to remind the younger members of the team not to get ahead of themselves but it was an outstanding performance against a very good side."

Munster coach Alan Gaffrey added "Gloucester were strong up front, with good half-backs and a lot of firepower out wide – they were very impressive. Playing at Kingsholm had an uplifting effect on Gloucester; we did not have enough possession."

Of the last eight European quarter-final ties to be played this weekend, seven will be played in England with Kingsholm one of the venues. Can we make it a hat trick of victories over Munster at Kingsholm? We will have a fight on our hands if we want to win here today, but we have come off as the best previously.

# MATCH OF THE DAYS

## THE TEAMS

### GLOUCESTER:

HENRY PAUL  
MARCEL GARVEY  
TERRY FANOLUA  
ROBERT TODD  
TOM BEIM  
LUDOVIC MERCIER  
ANDY GOMARSALL  
TREVOR WOODMAN  
OLIVER AZAM  
PHIL VICKERY (CAPTAIN)  
ADAM EUSTACE  
MARK CORNWELL  
JAKE BOER  
PETER BUXTON  
JAMES FORRESTER

### REPLACEMENTS:

JAMES SIMPSON-DANIEL  
CHRIS FORTEY  
ED PEARCE  
SIMON AMOR  
ROB FIDLER  
CLIVE STUART-SMITH  
RODRIGO RONCERO

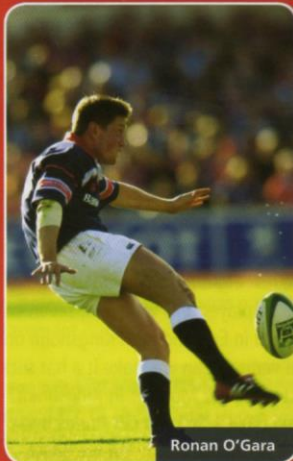
### MUNSTER:

JEREMY STAUNTON  
JOHN KELLY  
MIKE MULLINS  
ROB HENDERSON  
MOSSIE LAWLOR  
RONAN O'GARA  
PETER STRINGER  
MARCUS HORAN  
FRANK SHEAHAN  
JOHN HAYES  
MICK GALWEY  
MICK O'DRISCOLL,  
JIM WILLIAMS (CAPTAIN)  
ALAN QUINLAN  
ANTHONY FOLEY

### REPLACEMENTS:

JASON HOLLAND  
EDDIE HALVEY  
JAMES BLANEY  
SIMON KERR  
DENIS LEAMY  
MIKE PRENDERGAST  
DOMINIC CROTTY

REFEREE: J.DUME (FRANCE)



Ronan O'Gara



Peter Stringer



## FAN ZONE WITH BOB FENTON

Bob Fenton forgets Gloucester's latest Premiership defeat and instead turns his attentions towards the Heineken Cup – and believes the home side can hold Munster at bay today.

▶ THIS PREMIERSHIP thing is a bit stressful isn't it. A few weeks ago we seemed to be cruising away with it all, and now it's all gone a bit wobbly.

While its hard work for us at the top, it's pretty exciting for everyone else to watch as for the first time in about five years things look like they are going to go right down to the wire.

We all know that the trick is to finish in the top four and thus book your place in the play off competition, but there does seem to be something extra about finishing top this year.

Rather than simply scrapping for those play-off places it feels like any team down to around 6th place is in with a good chance of getting the top spot at the moment, which makes for a bit of tension and a few less fingernails.

Despite a few problems on the road we are still top of the pile, and that's probably in a better position than a lot of people thought we would be at the start of the season. Whether we can hang on and stay there until May remains to be seen, one things for sure though, we are going to have a major say in how things turn out.

In late April and early May we have Wasps away and Bath at home, real make or break matches. Hopefully by then we will have another of our walking wounded back. With Olly Morgan back in the side and having James Forrester on the right side of match fitness is great news.

If we can get both those two quality players back into the fold before the end of season it will be like signing two new superstars and will give the whole place a huge lift. I was watching some old DVDs



Olly Morgan



Luke Narraway



Gareth Delve



**It's hard to come up with a way of talking about this match without resorting to some pretty tired old clichés – clash of the titans, biggest game for years etc etc – and I'm not even going to start thinking of how many times commentators will talk about something called "The Miracle Match".**



the other day – the European Shield final at The Stoop to be precise – and was marvelling at Django's ability. He really is a one off – a huge talent.

But things have changed a bit while he has been away, Gareth Delve has shown he is a quality player and Luke Narraway has grabbed his chance too. Great to have such an array of talent scrapping for places.

It's hard to come up with a way of talking about this match without resorting to some pretty tired old clichés – clash of the titans, biggest game for years etc etc – and I'm not even going to start thinking of how many times commentators will talk about something called "The Miracle Match".

Well I was in Limerick that day and I didn't see any miracle. Nightmare match, maybe... I suppose it depends on which side of the water you live on.

But I suppose you can't get away from

it really – it is the biggest game of the season, and fantastic test of our progress so far. But one thing that will be overlooked is the fact that in our previous Heineken Cup group encounters, we have won both our home games. So what are the odds of making it three out of three today?

Well if you believe the pundits, pretty long indeed. But then what do they know – most of them said we would lose to London Irish and win at Worcester...

Munster are, without doubt, one of the great Heineken Cup sides. They seem to be able to pull unlikely victories out of nowhere, and when the chips are really down find some extra fight to see them through.

When you look through their side you cannot spot any weak links, just great players from one through to 22. I'm really looking forward to seeing Doug Howlett run out at Kingsholm today (I've parked my car – it's French - well away from

the ground as a precaution mind) he's a quality player who's done pretty much everything on the world stage. I hope he has a 'mare of course, but enjoys his trip to Kingsholm nonetheless.

Add to that squad the fact that they have a great supporter base for these matches (though you can't help wondering what the attendance at the massively improved Thomond Park is going to be like on a cold December Saturday against the likes of Edinburgh), and the atmosphere inside Kingsholm is going to be electric.

They are a great club off the field too - I zipped them through an email about the Walk to Wycombe to see whether they could send us something to auction, almost by return I received an invitation to go to their hotel when they arrive in Gloucester to pick up some items. That's quality.

Shame it's not a proper evening kick off under the flood lights as that would add a bit, though I doubt there will be many supporters from either side who will be able to say much come Sunday morning.

So can we do it today? Why not... They are a great outfit, but they're not red supermen, just fifteen players on a field – same as us.

For that reason I will remain confident that we can upset the form book and do something very special here today.

# BORN WINNER

He knows what it means to face off against Munster – Jake Boer led Gloucester to victory in 2002 and looks at his former club's chances tonight.

IF IT WAS possible to hand pick a player of recent vintage to deliver the final few words inside Gloucester's dressing room tonight, then Jake Boer has just about every credential possible to hit the right chord.

Not only did he skipper the club with distinction, he was a man of the soil – a blue collar grafter well schooled in the arts of fronting the very best from across Europe in the Heineken Cup.

When the flanker was in full war paint, summoning the sort of fury that made him one of the Premiership's most remarkably durable and consistent performers, tonight's red raw coming together would have been right up his street.

Boer knows better than most the unique history Europe's premier club competition has created between these two institutions. When Gloucester took the Munstermen on at their own game at Kingsholm in 2002 and swarmed to a wholly comprehensive 35-16 victory, Boer scored two tries and led the sort of performance you can usually only dream about.

And while he suffered twice in Munster's bear pit at Thomond Park, he is perfectly placed to assess Gloucester's chances tonight when they clash again in the quarter-finals.

"The thing about these games is that there is no let-up, they are always on a knife-edge and everything you do comes under greater scrutiny because you playing against one of the great teams," Boer said.

"Against a team as experienced as Munster you must be totally disciplined, get the foundations of your game right and play to the structure put in place by the coaches. If you fail to do that, you will just spend 80 minutes tackling and that essentially makes it almost impossible to win.

"The over-riding memory of the games we played against them was that they were so physical. The Heineken Cup seems to

bring out an additional level of physicality and the games usually come down to the smallest of margins – a missed tackle, a poor scrum, a lost line-out – these are margins you face when you play against a team like Munster.

"My advice would never let up on the pressure. Try and get 3-5-7 points in front and build a game from that foundation. I have watched Gloucester this season and their work ethic is outstanding – if you get them on the wrong day they can do terrible damage.

"They are building something special and if they get it right they can win – they deserve to be where they are because they work so hard at it. But there may not be any greater test than Munster in Europe – it's a massive game."

Boer retired at the end of the Guinness Premiership final last May – a depressingly sad end to a wonderfully committed career following Leicester's crushing victory – and when the matchday programme caught up with him this week he was moving house in South Africa – the 12th time in 13 years. After returning to his homeland to set up a travel, self-catering and sports-based adventure holiday business in Cape Town, Boer played one match for Western Province and this weekend will go full circle: back to the Villagers club where his career started all those years ago.

"The last six or seven months have been crazy with the business and although I was 90% retired I kept myself fit and played one match for Western Province," he said.

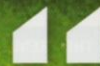
"I realised the rugby pitch was where I was born to be and now I am back at Villagers – it is our first league game on Saturday and I am loving every minute of it."

But he will be keeping a close eye on events at Kingsholm – a place where his feelings run deep – and be hoping for a cherished home-town victory in the vintage of 2002 where he and the likes of

Phil Vickery led the charge.

"If there is one team in world rugby where home support counts for so much it is probably Munster so the Kingsholm factor is a big one," he said.

"As a player these are the sort of occasions you are desperate to be involved in because they are the pinnacle of the club game. I will be thinking of them and if they get it right I am sure they can do it."



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