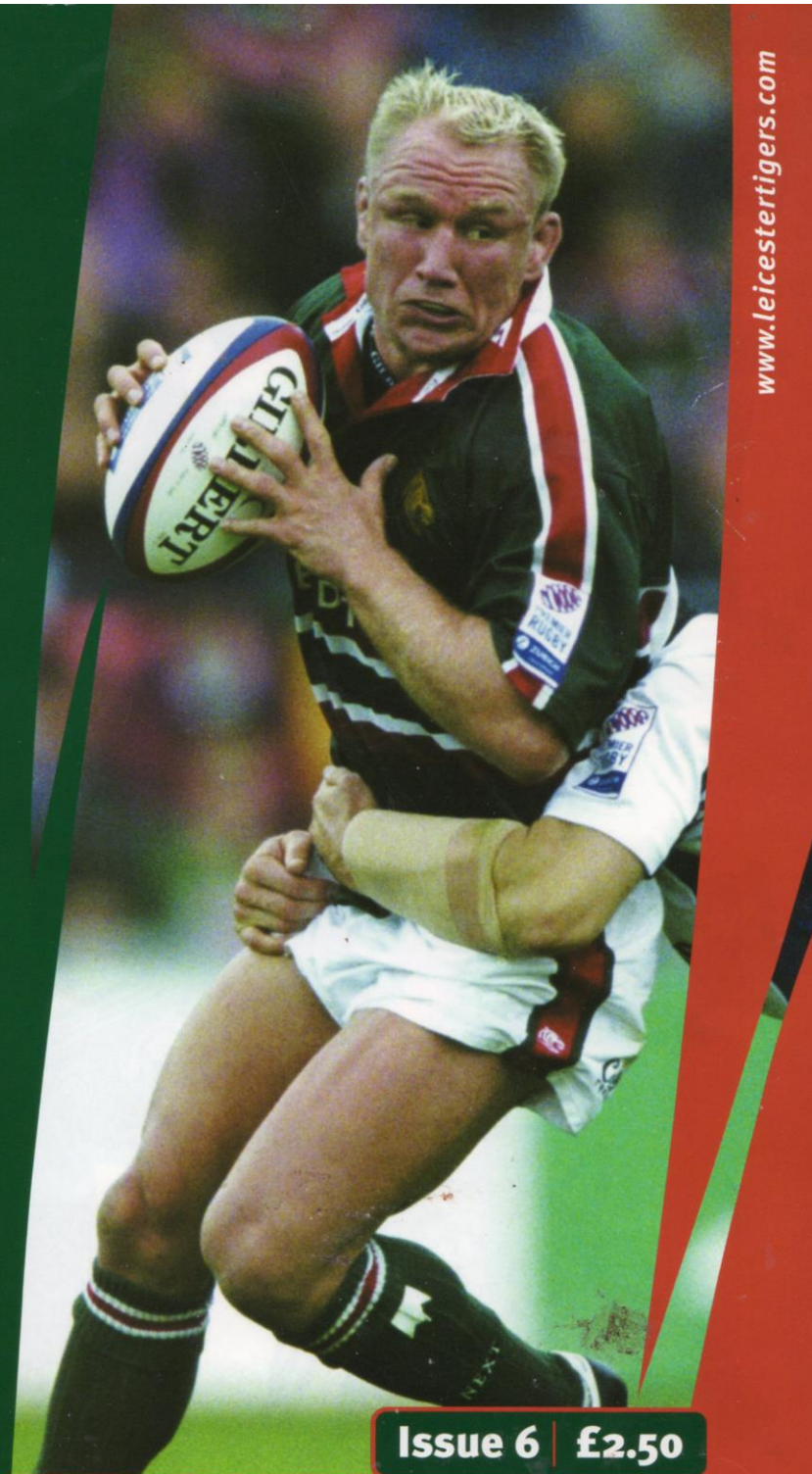




LEICESTER
TIGERS

game on

OFFICIAL MATCH PROGRAMME



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v Gloucester

Kick-off
7.45pm

Friday 15th November 2002

A Zurich Premiership Match



TODAY'S TEAMS at WELFORD ROAD

Friday 15th November 2002

KO 7.45pm



Leicester Tigers

Gloucester

15 Geordan Murphy	Full Back	Henry Paul 15
14 Leon Lloyd	Right Wing	Marcel Garvey 14
13 Ollie Smith	Outside Centre	Terry Fanolua 13
12 Rod Kafer	Inside Centre	Robert Todd 12
11 Steve Booth	Left Wing	Thinus Delpont 11
10 Craig McMullen	Fly Half	Ludovic Mercier 10
9 Harry Ellis	Scrum Half	Clive Stuart-Smith 9
1 Perry Freshwater	Loose Head Prop	Rodrigo Roncero 1
2 Dorian West (Capt)	Hooker	Chris Fortey 2
3 Franck Tournaire	Tight Head Prop	Andy Deacon 3
4 Louis Deacon	Second Row	Rob Fidler 4
5 Martin Corry	Second Row	Adam Eustace 5
6 Will Johnson	Blindside Flanker	Jake Boer (Capt) 6
7 Josh Kronfeld	Openside Flanker	James Forrester 7
8 Adam Balding	No. 8	Junior Paramore 8
16 Darren Garforth	Replacements	Simon Amor 16
17 George Chuter	REFEREE:	Daren O'Leary 17
18 Peter Short	<i>To be confirmed</i>	Chris Catling 18
19 Ben Gerry	TOUCH JUDGES:	Andy Frost 19
20 Jamie Hamilton	<i>To be confirmed</i>	Olivier Azam 20
21 Glenn Gelderbloom	<i>Internationals are denoted in bold</i>	Mark Irish 21
22 Sam Vesty		Pete Buxton 22

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Visitors Book



Before the London Irish fixture last weekend, Gloucester's director of rugby Nigel Melville exclaimed that he was ready to write a book on Gloucester Rugby Club.

Melville is no great Club historian but he felt compelled to put to print the stories of things that Gloucester had never done.

Nigel Melville - Gloucester Director of Rugby

For example, Gloucester have never won a league game against arch rivals Bath at the Rec, a draw had to suffice this year, the Cherry and Whites have also never beaten London Wasps away from home, and despite a magnificent effort from fourteen men two weekends ago, that statistic will also remain for another season.

Until last weekend, Gloucester had never beaten London Irish on their patch but a wonderful second half performance finally saw at least one archaic record put to bed.

Tonight Gloucester have the unenviable task of laying another 'have never' to rest, as they travel to Welford Road to play a hungry pack of Leicester Tigers.

No doubt stung by early season criticism and the fact that another team has the audacity to stake an early claim for the Tigers domestic crown, one expects the wounded Tigers to defend their magnificent home record to the death.

So what of Gloucester's chances tonight as they enter the Tiger's den. The Cherry and Whites have certainly built momentum for this potentially explosive clash. One loss all season at Adam's Park

and a six point lead at the top of the Premiership certainly puts them in a strong position, but what of the 'Have Never' record.

Traditionally Gloucester were poor travellers, once outside the confines of fortress Kingsholm the Cherry and Whites lost their invincible aura, but not this year.

Nigel Melville and Dean Ryan have set about establishing an attitude, a game plan and a professionalism that can cope with any situation. The Gloucester side of 2002-03 is one with a strong resolve, particularly in the face of adversity, and no little talent to boot.

Where before they may have crumbled, this Gloucester side is getting used to rising to the big occasion, and even without showing their best rugby, are winning vital games and like against the Irish, they are picking up valuable away points.

As the Tigers will testify, once you are at the top, you are fair game and there to be shot at. Tonight though, it will be the Tigers on the hunt.

It's time to tear out another chapter in the 'Gloucester have never...' book.





Looking Back

A warm welcome to all our friends from Gloucester.

A pity such an important game will be played by depleted sides due to autumn internationals. Congratulations all the same to Gloucester coming out of the blocks quickly this season and topping the Premiership with an exciting brand of rugby, particularly the form of their exciting young wing prospects. What an exciting game in prospect with the form of the Gloucester forwards and control of Mercier and Gomersall.

So many battles against Gloucester have been written into folk law. Who charged down more kicks than Peter Ford with the longest arms and legs in the business in my playing days ably aided and abetted by such as Mike Nichols, Dick Smith, Alan Brinn and that well-built centre John Bayliss chirpily conducted by Micky Booth. We claimed ascendancy of the Gloucester clubhouse one Guy Fawkes Saturday with a few crow-scarers. Tigers came away with an impressive typically hard-fought 3-0 win on another occasion. The score came from a push over try, practically unheard of for the Gloucester pack to be pushed back over their own line. The shed had the sportsmanship to cheer us off the pitch. Not much changes! They have always been a no-nonsense uncompromising side.

What an exciting international game England v New Zealand was. That is what the best games are all about. Some magnificently positive rugby with the result in doubt until the final whistle. We were well-pleased, earlier, at Franklin's Gardens to win a second consecutive away game, this time against Northampton Saints. Well done to the unsung heroes who came into the Tigers team, so depleted by international calls as were the Saints, and did the business. The longer the game wore on the stronger we seemed to get and had the Saints in a vice-like grip

towards the end. My unsung hero of the match was Oliver Smith, first match back from injury who put in a large number of tackles including two vitally important ones. Credit due to Keith Barwell and Northampton who marked the occasion by opening another stand making the ground now a very impressive stadium. Pleasing to meet up again with Peter Larter, Don White, Piggy Powell from my era as was another Northampton stalwart, Ron Jacobs, old Oakhamian, retired farmer, past president of the RFU and experienced former England tight head prop with legs like tree trunks who sadly passed away this week.

One game earlier against Wasps we witnessed a dire struggle played in difficult conditions with no tries scored and no points scored in the second half, both must be close to Premiership records. At least we got the right result. The conditions must have come close to matching those in the championship play-off against Bristol last season. What the younger Tigers players would make of playing with the old slippery brown balls, sometimes on poor surfaces and training among the dog manure on Mandela Park, the old Recreation ground, in pouring rain is anybody's guess. I hope these words won't come back to haunt me, but I think, considering the amount of rain recently, Welford Road pitch looks in as good a condition as I have seen it.

To everyone, enjoy the game.

David Matthews - President

"The conditions must have come close to matching those in the championship play-off against Bristol last season."

