

Quins

HARLEQUINS

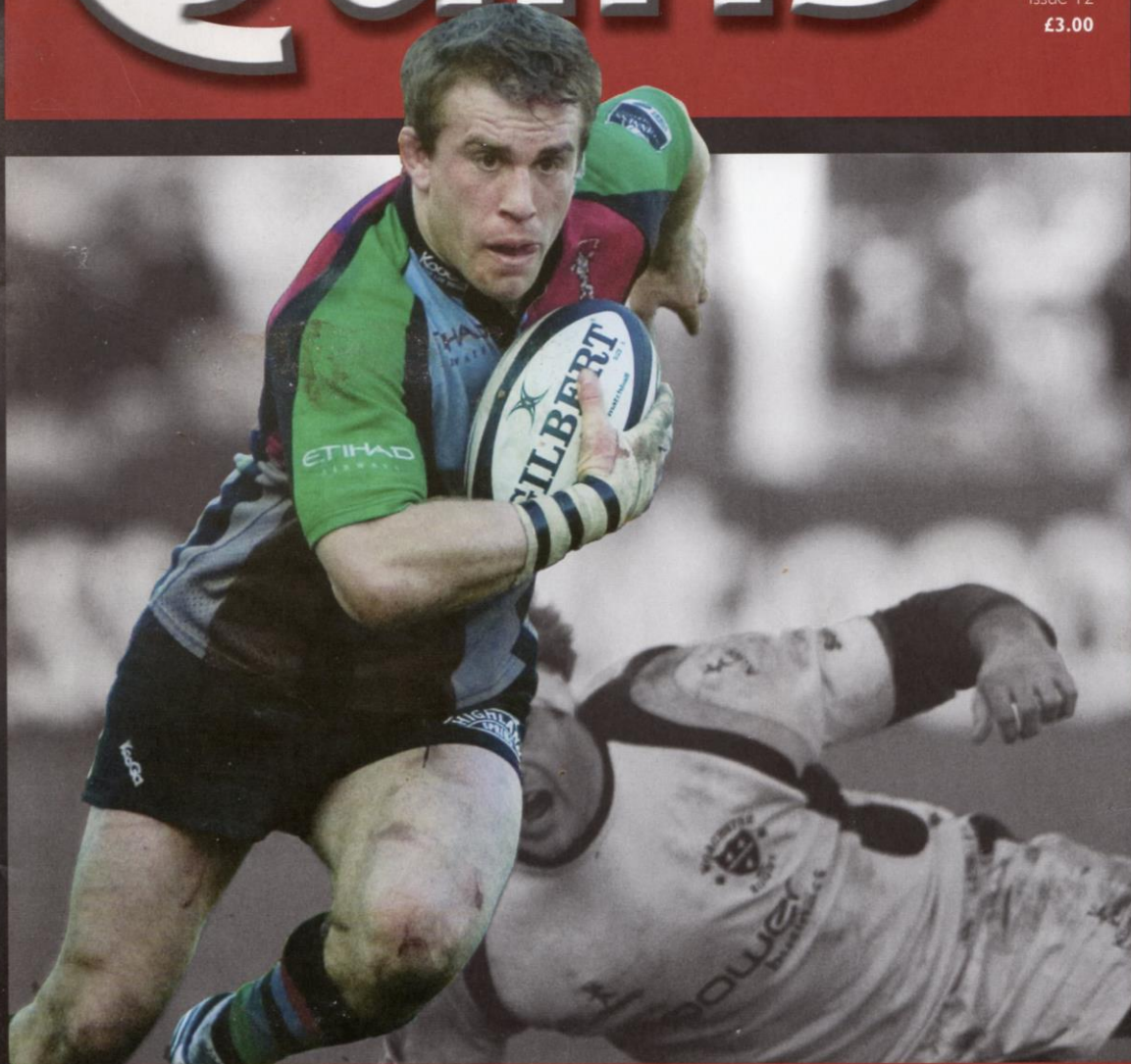
Official Matchday
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2007/08

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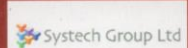
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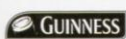
Saturday 1st March 2008
Guinness Premiership
Kick-Off 2.45pm



Main Sponsor



Match Sponsor



www.guinnesspremiership.com



MAX!

COINCIDENCE, OR WHAT?! With the visit of Gloucester, we here at MAX! can't help but notice the similarities between our own Twickenham Stoop and the home ground of the Glaws. Whilst we have the 'Kings Bar', Gloucester's ground is called 'Kingsholm' – 'holm', as we all know, is an ancient Celtic word for bar or drinking den! (Incidentally, you'll be right royally entertained post-match by one of the best bands that performs at the Stoop, 'The Overtures' plus discotheque music with Mad Max to follow, right through to four in the morning!) Secondly at Kingsholm you can hear the intimidating grunts of the Glaws faithful in the 'Shed', whilst we have the high pitched shrieks of the Community Kids from the 'Marquee' (or the temporary new South Stand as it is formally known!)

One would think that these glaring similarities are enough for the table-toppers to take note of the young pretenders from TW2 but add to these, the fact that our form both in the 'away' fixture at Gloucester back in November and our recent victories has even led Stuart Barnes to be complimentary about the Quins (I believe he is receiving medication!) you won't be surprised to hear that there is a nervous tension in the West!

Adding to this tension is the pressure that the Heineken Cup has produced for the team and fans. Not the fact that they are now seen as one of the tournament favourites or that they are potentially only two games away from the final in Cardiff. The real pressure is the date that the final falls upon. You see the 24th May clashes with one of the most bizarre, and yet popular events, that takes place in the county of

Gloucester at a place called Coopers Hill. The annual Gloucestershire 'Cheese Rolling and Wake' has been taking place for possibly hundreds of years and is a firm favourite of both locals, visitors and, we speculate, rugby players and fans alike!

It is hard to explain how wonderfully British and eccentric this event is, so we suggest that you visit www.cheese-rolling.co.uk for more details.

The basic idea, however, is that competitors climb to the top of Coopers Hill and then chase an 8lb Double Gloucester round cheese down the hill with the catcher keeping the cheese as his/her prize! Now this, on the face of things, sounds quite easy however if you now take into consideration that this hill has, in places, a gradient of 1-in-1 you might begin to understand that this is no ordinary race. Inevitably there are injuries to competitors, indeed the event has only been cancelled on three occasions; once due to foot and mouth in 2001, another due to the St. John's ambulance team due to attend, dealing with an earthquake in Algeria in 2003 and the other cancellation was in 1998 as on the previous year 33 people were injured and so the police cancelled the event as they were concerned about competitor and spectator safety! The website, however, fails to detail the steps that were taken to make the event safer; to ensure that it was back in the year 2000... quite frankly you couldn't make it safer or, moreover, more un-safe!

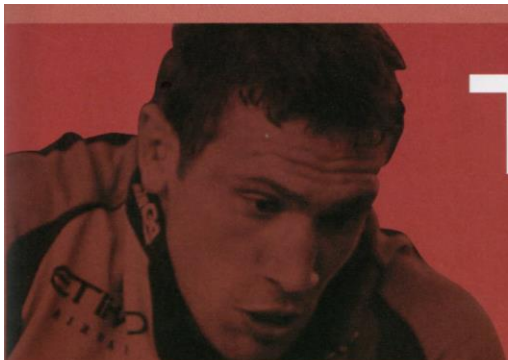
Justification for this wonderful event comes in the form of 'research', which claims that the event could have been

started by the Phoenicians, or Romans and evolved from early fertility rites and hopes of a successful harvest. We here at Max contend this is probably utter rubbish and was the dream child of some drunken locals who fell down the hill and convinced like-minded nutters to follow suit! Our research/evidence shows that the cheese rolling was only part of the original Coopers Hill Wake along with 'wrestling for a belt' and 'shin-kicking', so we feel that you don't need justification to partake in this West Country tradition just alcohol!

However, another possible 'qualification' to take part in the event seems to link in with the ability for Gloucester RFC to attract South Sea Islanders, I mean England rugby players, to Kingsholm*. You see winners in recent years – both male and female – seem to hail from that 'neck of the woods' and perhaps player contract talks involve the incentive of 'tackling things which tower menacingly above you and reaching new heights'. Perhaps potential players at Gloucester should ask for the 'small print' to be defined, lest they find themselves on some interesting training – downhill – runs!

So, dear hearts wherever you are on the weekend on the 24th May – good luck! ■

* an anagram of Lesley Vainikolo is John Smith (if you miss-spell it lots and squint at the letters), a very English name; so don't ever doubt Les' eligibility!



TODAY'S VISITORS



IT HAS BEEN A STRANGE START TO 2008 FOR THE CURRENT GUINNESS PREMIERSHIP LEADERS.

Losing away to the Ospreys in the Heineken Cup could hardly be described as a surprise, they were on the soggy end of a 10-5 defeat in the mud against Bath and then a thriller against Leicester during the international period.

The one defeat to really set the fires raging at Castle Grim was at Bristol – when head coach Dean Ryan described the performance as 'appalling' and 'unacceptable'. But amid all of this, Ryan's side have actually extended their lead at the top of the table to five points and will make the trip to the Twickenham Stoop this afternoon in good health, following victory over Newcastle last weekend.

Ryan will have his international players

available again, as Gloucester look to consolidate their position at the top of the table, ahead of their Heineken Cup quarter-final against Munster next month.

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 and have since lost only three times in the competition. 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 Ryan Lamb, the rapidly emerging Allen and full-back Olly Morgan had another season under their belts, heavy weights arrived in numbers. Lesley Vainikolo, the try-hunting giant from Bradford was the most high profile arrival and has scored nine times already in Premiership. He now has three England caps, following his debut against Wales last month and is a key man in the squad.

Scotland's Chris Paterson and Fiji's Akapusi Qera have both added to Gloucester's strength in depth. 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.

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 total 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.

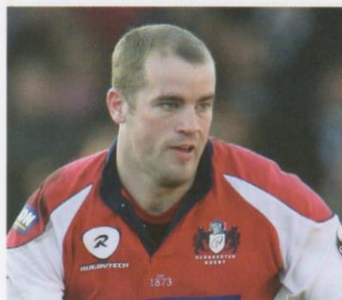
However, it was tougher than the scoreline suggested. Thanks to a brilliant individual try from James Simpson-Daniel, a punishing drive and score from hooker Olivier Azam and a returning try from Mike Tindall Gloucester eased to victory in front of almost 16,000 supporters.

Although the EDF Energy Cup passed them by again for another season, Gloucester qualified top of their Heineken Pool following four bonus point victories in six attempts and Ryan has already re-signed a number of key individuals ahead of next season. Although 2008 has yet to see them reproduce the rugby that saw them make such a great start to the season, there is enough in Ryan's squad to suggest they can continue challenging on two fronts. ■



TODAY'S VISITORS

ONES TO WATCH



JAMES SIMPSON-DANIEL POSITION: Wing D.O.B: 30/05/82
HEIGHT: 6ft 0in WEIGHT: 14st 6lb

He has 10 tries in 19 appearances this season and was the singular difference against Newcastle. His way to the line is one thing, but Simpson-Daniel offers so much else. Gloucester has used him in the centre this season, where his attacking instincts are capable of causing havoc. He distributes as well as anyone and, alongside Lesley Vainikolo and Iain Balshaw, completes one of the most threatening back threes in the country.

It is somewhat of a mystery why he only has 10 England caps, following his debut in 2002, but a combination of illnesses and injury have prevented him earning a more regular starting place. Simpson-Daniel will be one of Gloucester's key men this afternoon.



GARETH DELVE
POSITION: Number 8
D.O.B: 30/12/82
HEIGHT: 6ft 3in
WEIGHT: 18st 1lb

The number eight arrived from Bath in the summer and has proved to be one of the most important signings of the season. Physical, durable and benefitting from a run of games at the back of the scrum, Delve has been a key man in Gloucester's progression this term.

In 12 appearances in all competitions, he has scored two tries but it is his energy, work-rate and ball carrying qualities from the base of the scrum and contact area that have been vital to Gloucester's forward momentum.



NICK WOOD
POSITION: Prop
D.O.B: 09/01/83
HEIGHT: 6ft 1in
WEIGHT: 17st 5lb

Unfortunate not to press his claims in England's Six Nations squad, Wood has been one of Gloucester's most consistent performers this season. The loose-head prop progressed through Gloucester's Academy set-up and is now a regular pick in the front row. Only injury prevented him gaining England recognition on last summer's tour to South Africa but his expert scrummaging and work at close quarters means he is one of a new breed of props coming through.

A language specialist, Wood has learned a great deal from Patrice Collazo and Christian Califano and is one of the most consistent props in the business.



RYAN LAMB
POSITION: Stand-off
D.O.B: 18/05/86
HEIGHT: 5ft 9in
WEIGHT: 13st 5lb

Luxuriously gifted, Lamb is mentioned in the same breath as Danny Cipriani and Shane Geraghty as a player who may well threaten to break into the England fold soon. A beautiful passer of the ball, capable of making a break and linking play brilliantly, Lamb has everything at his disposal.

Lamb has recently committed himself to his home-town club for another two years and is only three points shy of 100 in the Premiership this season. He has also won three man of the match awards in the Heineken Cup this season.

GLOUCESTER



GROUND: KINGSHOLM STADIUM
CAPACITY: 16,000
DIRECTOR OF RUGBY: DEAN RYAN
CLUB WEBSITE:
WWW.GLOUCESTERRUGBY.CO.UK

JACK ADAMS

Position: Centre
D.O.B: 17/09/86
Height: 1.82m
Weight: 96kg

ANTHONY ALLEN

Position: Centre
D.O.B: 01/09/86
Height: 1.80m
Weight: 92kg

OLIVIER AZAM

Position: Hooker
D.O.B: 21/10/74
Height: 1.85m
Weight: 120kg

ALASDAIR STROKOSCH

Position: Back row
D.O.B: 21/02/83
Height: 1.91m
Weight: 107kg

RORY LAWSON

Position: Scrum half
D.O.B: 12/03/81
Height: 1.73m
Weight: 85kg

MARCO BORTOLAMI

Position: Second Row
D.O.B: 12/06/80
Height: 1.95m
Weight: 112kg

IAIN BALSHAW

Position: Wing/Full back
D.O.B: 14/04/79
Height: 1.85m
Weight: 94kg

ALEX BROWN

Position: Second Row
D.O.B: 17/05/79
Height: 2.01m
Weight: 116kg

PETER BUXTON

Position: Back Row
D.O.B: 21/08/78
Height: 1.92m
Weight: 115kg

WILLIE WALKER

Position: Full back
D.O.B: 19/05/78
Height: 1.83m
Weight: 88kg

MARK FOSTER

Position: Wing
D.O.B: 02/09/83
Height: 1.83m
Weight: 100kg

GARETH COOPER

Position: Scrum half
D.O.B: 07/05/79
Height: 1.72m
Weight: 84kg

ANDY TITTERELL

Position: Hooker
D.O.B: 10/01/81
Height: 1.81m
Weight: 94kg

JACK FORSTER

Position: Prop
D.O.B: 19/03/87
Height: 1.86m
Weight: 120kg

WILL JAMES

Position: Second Row
D.O.B: 22/12/76
Height: 1.99m
Weight: 120kg

ANDY HAZELL

Position: Back row
D.O.B: 25/04/78
Height: 1.83m
Weight: 95kg

LUKE NARRAWAY

Position: Back row
D.O.B: 07/08/83
Height: 1.90m
Weight: 108kg

CHRISTIAN CALIFANO

Position: Prop
D.O.B: 16/05/72
Height: 1.80m
Weight: 112kg

JONATHAN PENDLEBURY

Position: Second Row
D.O.B: 15/01/83
Height: 1.94m
Weight: 110kg

AKAPUSI QERA

Position: Back row
D.O.B: 24/04/84
Height: 1.94m
Weight: 103kg

MIKE PRENDERGAST

Position: Scrum half
D.O.B: 21/05/77
Height: 1.80m
Weight: 84kg

ALI JAMES

Position: Centre
D.O.B: 11/10/79
Height: 1.83m
Weight: 95kg

CHRIS PATERSON

Position: Full back/Fly half
D.O.B: 30/03/78
Height: 1.83m
Weight: 79kg

LESLEY VAINIKOLO

Position: Wing
D.O.B: 04/05/79
Height: 1.88m
Weight: 102kg

JEREMY PAUL

Position: Hooker
D.O.B: 14/03/77
Height: 1.84m
Weight: 104kg

CARLOS NIETO

Position: Prop
D.O.B: 28/04/78
Height: 1.86m
Weight: 110kg

ADAM BALDING

Position: Back row
D.O.B: 07/12/79
Height: 1.88m
Weight: 110kg

ALASDAIR DICKINSON

Position: Prop
D.O.B: 11/09/83
Height: 1.84m
Weight: 112kg

TODAY'S TEAMS



HARLEQUINS



GLOUCESTER RUGBY

HARLEQUINS vs GLOUCESTER

Guinness Premiership Round 14
Saturday 1st March 2008
Kick-off 2.45pm

HARLEQUINS

POSITION:	6
PLAYED:	13
WON:	7
LOST:	6
DRAWN:	0
POINTS:	36

GLOUCESTER

POSITION:	1
PLAYED:	14
WON:	10
LOST:	4
DRAWN:	0
POINTS:	47

TODAY'S OFFICIALS

Referee:
SEAN DAVEY

Touch Judge:
BOB MULLIS

Touch Judge:
PAUL DIX

Fourth Official:
TOM MOSES

THE RESULT

HARLEQUINS:



GLOUCESTER:



HARLEQUINS

VS

GLOUCESTER

Mike Brown	NO: 15 FULL BACK	Iain Balshaw
Tom Williams	NO: 14 WING	Lesley Vainikolo
Haldane Luscombe	NO: 13 CENTRE	Jack Adams
Tosh Masson	NO: 12 CENTRE	Anthony Allen
Ugo Monye	NO: 11 WING	James Simpson-Daniel
Adrian Jarvis	NO: 10 FLY HALF	Ryan Lamb
Danny Care	NO: 9 SCRUM HALF	Rory Lawson
Ceri Jones	NO: 1 PROP	Nick Wood
Tani Fuga	NO: 2 HOOKER	Olivier Azam
Mike Ross	NO: 3 PROP	Carlos Nieto
James Percival	NO: 4 LOCK	Marco Bortolami
Nicolas Spanghero	NO: 5 LOCK	Alex Brown
Chris Robshaw	NO: 6 FLANKER	Alasdair Strokosch
Will Skinner	NO: 7 FLANKER	Akapusi Qera
Nick Easter	NO: 8	Luke Narryway

REPLACEMENTS

Chris Brooker	NO: 16	Andy Titterrell
John Brooks	NO: 17	Christian Califano
George Robson	NO: 18	Peter Buxton
Chris Hala'Ufia	NO: 19	Gareth Delve
Andy Gomarsall	NO: 20	Gareth Cooper
Chris Malone	NO: 21	Mark Foster
De Wet Barry	NO: 22	Willie Walker