

# GLOUCESTER

*The Cherry and Whites*



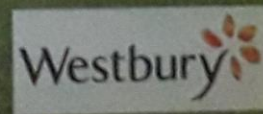
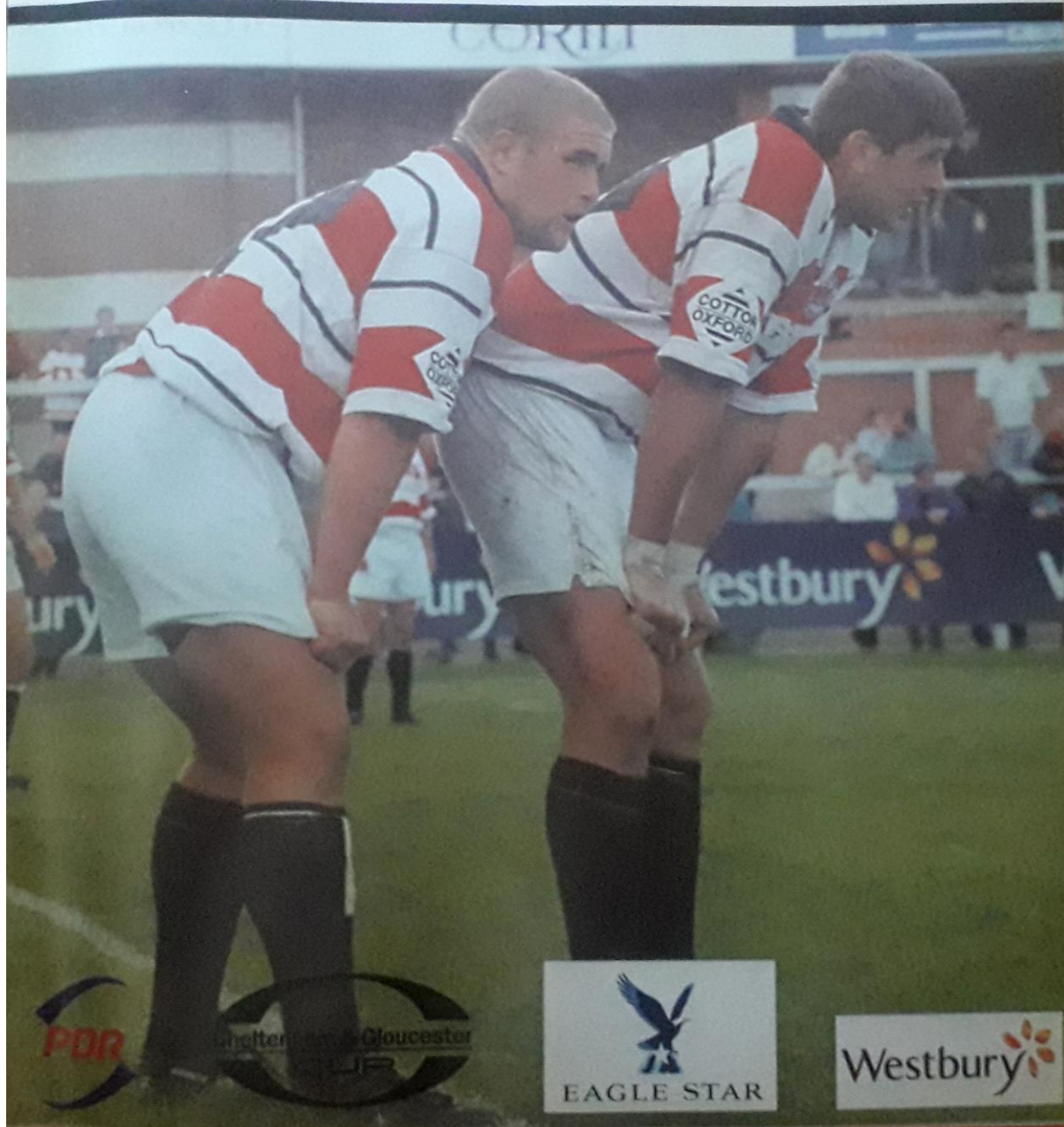
GLOUCESTER V WAKEFIELD

£1.00

6th February 1998 KO 7.45pm

Vol 2/10

Today's Match Day Sponsor: CHELTENHAM & GLOUCESTER



# From the Management

by Richard Hill



It's like waiting for a bus, waiting for a Gloucester game at Kingsholm, none for ages then two come at once. Not that I'm complaining especially after last weekend's super win over Leicester. I'm sure that result surprised many rugby pundits around the country but to be honest it didn't surprise me at all, it just made me very happy. After what I count as two very unlucky defeats against Harlequins and Wasps we were overdue for a big win, and they don't come much bigger than the Leicester Tigers. I see that Mark Mapletoft has won most of the acclaim from the pundits, and to score 27 points including a try was a tremendous effort, but I wouldn't single out any individual the victory over Leicester was secured by an outstanding team effort.

What is also very pleasing is that the two points from the Leicester win lifts us into the sort of league position that we deserve. We are now fifth in the table, but I'd warn against anyone expecting too much from us. That's not being negative, but we have still got a very young side without the experience that other clubs have got. Yes, I am confident that we can beat anyone on our day, but to me the most important objective at the moment is to guarantee our place in the Allied Dunbar Premiership One for next season,

and that means sticking clear of the bottom four places.

Our aim tonight when we welcome Wakefield to Kingsholm is to secure a home draw in the quarter finals of the Cheltenham and Gloucester Cup. Many have criticised this competition, but as far as I'm concerned, if you are in it you should want to win it, and that is certainly the way we're approaching the match.

Without our England A internationals who are taking on the French, the team will have a slightly different look, but that doesn't mean to say we are underestimating tonight's opponents. Wakefield may be near to the foot of Premiership 2, but they have a 100 percent record in this cup competition so far this season, and that includes a win over Northampton. I also remember a very difficult game at



Wakefield in the Cup last year which we narrowly won. They have a good pack, a good set of half backs and we'll have to play well to win, and win I'm sure we will.

Unfortunately I'm away from Kingsholm tonight with the England Squad but I'll be on the phone first thing tomorrow to find out the score. And hopefully I'll be able to celebrate both wins for Gloucester and England before the weekend is out.



# Super Six



Chris Catling

Dave Sims

Mark Mapletoft

Rob Fidler

Scott Benton



Phil Vickery

Of course, the England v France 'A' team match will be all done and dusted by the time you read this. However, we can't let the occasion pass without acknowledging the fact that Gloucester had no fewer than six members of the 21-strong England squad. There could even have been more if there weren't one or two injuries about.

To start from the back, it is particularly nice to see Chris Catling's qualities being recognised in this way. It looks as if the England full-back job is, if not exactly up for grabs, at least a realistic target for any young player who can seize his opportunities and Chris has always been one for doing that. And how about the half-back pairing of Mark Mapletoft and Scott Benton? At the time of writing, I don't know if they did make the starting line-up, but if so then it must be something of a record. Can anyone recall two half-backs from Gloucester playing as a unit at this level before this season? I must confess that I can't. 'Tofty', of course, played for England in Argentina, possibly a little too early for his own good, but Scotty has really only muscled his way into contention over the last few months, against some particularly strong competition. In England terms, Phil Vickery must be regarded as one of the finds of the season. Propforwardology is a particularly difficult and technical

discipline, and usually demands a long apprenticeship, so for Phil to get as far as he has at his tender age is a noteworthy accomplishment. He has all the time in the world, and we wish him all the luck he can get. Rob Fidler must have been in the England management's mind for a while. He has had a storming couple of seasons, and in some eras, and some other countries, would have had a full Cap or two by now. Again, he still has a little way to go, but could well be featuring by the time the World Cup rolls around. And so we come to Dave Sims. Why on earth he hasn't played for England before now is one of the riddles of the ages. Surely his chance must come before too long, and be overdue at that. He certainly wouldn't let the International side down whenever his talents were to be recognised. His pure presence on the field is a treasure which should be cherished. Hope you do (did) well lads. We're all rooting for you.

While this Programme was going to press, changes were announced to the England and England 'A' squads for the French matches. Corrections to the 'Super Six' article are therefore in order.

## FIRST THE BAD NEWS

SCOTT BENTON has withdrawn from the 'A' side through injury. Better luck next time, Scotty!

## NOW THE GOOD NEWS

Winger BRIAN JOHNSON has been called up to the England 'A' squad

## AND THE EVEN BETTER NEWS

PHIL VICKERY now joins the full England squad. Best of luck to both.

Thanks to Andrew Harley, Press Officer for tipping me off so promptly.

Gloucester v Wakefield, 6th February 1998





Richard Hill

*"This is a vital third quarter of the season for us. We need to pick up four more wins in the next quarter to give ourselves a chance. Points will be very hard to come by after that."*

## GLOUCESTER

# 18pts AND HOME

Eighteen points. That is the target which should see Gloucester safe in Courage League One this season.

What it will also do is reward a team without superstars for keeping their status in the top flight when all around are spending money like it was going out of existence.

The reality also is that, from a position where the men from Kingsholm were struggling to get a win by November, now they stand in midtable, just out of the relegation zone but also within a hair's breadth of a taste of Europe.

Continental rugby is, however, a long way from the thoughts of Richard Hill. Gloucester's Director of Rugby will see his major achievement of the year being survival rather than glory. If Europe comes, it will be an added bonus, the icing on the Cherry and Whites' cake.

Vital victories over London Irish (twice), away at Orrell and West Hartlepool plus a brilliant performance to beat current leaders Wasps 28-23 at Kingsholm on October 5 have lifted Gloucester four points clear of the danger zone and just one victory away from a place in the top six.

But the next three league games will prove whether Gloucester can reach that 18 point total they have set themselves. They take on West Hartlepool today at Kingsholm, and also face Orrell at home plus having to face west country rivals Bristol. Hill said: "This is a vital third quarter of the season for us. We need to pick up four more wins in the next quarter to give ourselves a chance. Points will be very hard to come by after that."

But the former Bath and England

captain said that, if survival is achieved, it will form a platform for Gloucester to build on for the future and justify his risk not to spend any money on big names.

Hill added: "I would be very proud of the players if we did stay up. I don't agree with buying in a load of superstars. I am just happy to build a squad at Gloucester who have a long-term future."

"I wouldn't like to hazard a guess about the wage bill somebody like, say, Saracens have got to pay out for their superstars. It must be astronomical."

"At Gloucester, we need to get better but we will not go for instant success."

Even if Gloucester reach that 18 points target, Hill said he will still not think about Continental rugby.

The rugby director added: "Europe is not a target this year and nobody has been thinking about it."

"But once we have got to 18 points, then maybe that's a sign that we can relax and then just knock off one of the clubs above us."

There is still a long way to go for Gloucester, but last season they were in desperate straits and had to produce a Houdini act to get out of jail at the bottom of the table, although, ultimately, nobody went down.

This season, Gloucester, who have told all the other Courage League One clubs that their England international hooker is not for sale, are in far better shape.

And maybe, if they avoid the bottom four who will go down, it could be the start of a major revival in the slumbering giant, of a city where rugby is king - or, should we say, Kingsholm!



# No smile on the face of the Tigers



That was a super result last Sunday. It certainly changed things tablewise, and has, no doubt, given a massive boost to the side's self-confidence. Mark Mapletoft has obviously had all the publicity, as you would expect after scoring 27 points out of 35, and scoring a blistering try from his own ten-metre line. However, eavesdropping on the radio interview given by England manager, Clive Woodward gave me some very intriguing information.

Mr. Woodward gave his most favourable judgements to Phil Vickery and Scott Benton. Phil got the accolade for his propping against 'International opposition', and Scotty was described as having come a long way up the ladder in recent months, or words to that effect.

Of course, one shouldn't read too much into off-the-cuff remarks made immediately after the event, without time for sober reflection, but it is interesting that those were his first thoughts, isn't it? I hope both players heard about the interview, and have every chance to advance their prospects in today's England 'A' game.



*Terry Fanolua under pressure from Leicester's Craig Joiner*



*Pictures courtesy of Bruce Seabrook*



## A VIEW FROM THE GRANDSTAND

by R. Dwyer

The last two league home games, Richmond and Leicester, seemed a lifetime apart. During that hiatus Gloucester supporters have had to suffer a nail-biting loss on the soccer turf at Lotus Road, a nail-biting win in gale force winds down at the Memorial Ground and a humiliating Cup defeat at Northampton. Only a relatively comfortable win in the dreadful conditions prevailing at London Welsh gave Gloucester fans any comfort. The wins over Ashley Levett's Richmond and the despairing Bob Dwyer's Leicester were characterised by all that is good about today's Gloucester Rugby Football Club.

The traditional strengths remain: a strong mobile pack and solid partisan support. But now Gloucester have a back line of which they can be proud. Messrs Tombs and Fonolua have brought exactly the kind of professional approach to Gloucester that supporters have long been yearning for. Coupled with the excellent Cotling and the hot new prospects Johnson and Jewell (a ready made double act for the future perhaps?), marshalled by Mapletoft and Benton, Gloucester now have the ability to create chances from any part of the

pitch and at any time in the match. But what Gloucester needs is consistency. Week in and week out supporters of all clubs want their team to win - none more so than the paying customer at Kingsholm. Gloucester's strong home record has kept them in the top flight since the league's inception but a soft away record means that at best Gloucester are struggling to compete with the top clubs, at worst struggling to avoid a relegation dogfight. Richard Hill has worked wonders with the squad and his signings over the last year have all been quality players.

In the context of the other highly sponsored clubs aiming to do the same, he has been shrewd and wise and the evidence exists to support the notion that Gloucester are on the way to the very top. The narrow losses at home to Harlequins and away to Wasps and the superb fight back to draw at Sale were a distinct improvement on the performances in the equivalent fixtures over recent years. Surely it is not a mere flight of fancy to suggest that these close results can go Gloucester's way in the future. It is clear that the overall standard of play in the Premiership has improved and dare it be said that

Gloucester's improvement has more than followed this trend. How different this season might have been for Gloucester if the fixture list had not been so disjointed. Ignoring the obvious financial arguments, who could disagree with the investors such as Gloucester's own Tom Walkinshaw in their call for a more structured season - the move to withdraw from next season's European competitions only serving to underline the point. Not only would the investors gain from regular competitive play but so would the most important element of Rugby - the supporters.

Let us all hope that common sense prevails and that a decently organised European club competition can be slotted into next season's schedule. European Cup Rugby is the way of the future and as the Five Nations prepares to become the Six Nations (or more as Rugby develops throughout Europe), English Clubs need to continue to compete with the best in the Northern Hemisphere. A strong home league will produce a strong national side and no matter which team you support, success for England is a common goal. The Rugby World Cup is drawing ever closer.

## STRAIGHT TALKING

G.L. Oster

So here we go again. I love this weekend, the start of the Five Nations Championship, it's the most exciting weekend of the year. And what a start to this year's tournament, the clash of the titans France versus England. Surely tomorrow's game will determine the outcome of the whole competition, and I'm sure it's a game that all rugby fans will be keen to see. But in that lies the problem, because the majority of loyal supporters of the game will be denied the opportunity to watch this match live.

I'LL GIVE IT TO YOU STRAIGHT, it is outrageous that I and many thousands of others won't be able to see the thrills and spills in Paris unfold because we have not got a funny shaped plastic thing on the outside of our houses. I am not against BSkyB and satellite television, it's a reality but what I am against is the hijacking of

such an important event as the Five Nations. After all the event is part of our heritage, there's a whole culture surrounding the preparation of the bacon butties, the cooling of the cans and the jostling of position in the lounge. Am I to be denied forever more that pre match interview with a red-nosed Bill Beaumont at the start of Grandstand? And what about Bill Maclaren's description of the celebrations in some obscure rugby club once frequented by the try scorer, I mean Barnesy isn't bad for an old Bath boy but he lacks the poetry of the Beeb's Mr Rugby, Bill Maclaren.

I know Sky has put a great deal of money into the game, and that money isn't half needed after the news this week that those great Brummies Moseley have had to bring in the receivers to save themselves from total collapse. But I object

to being blackmailed to go out and buy a dish. They can keep their Super Soccer Sunday and the rest, but I want my Five Nations back, and I want it back on Grandstand where it belongs. And as for being able to watch Scotland against Ireland live on terrestrial TV well that game could be fun for a curtain raiser but I also want to see the big boys play. Talking of big boys I've been finding the in-depth previews to the competition in every sports supplement worth it's salt interesting reading. And without a hint of bias I must place Robert Kitson at the top of the tree as he's obviously an astute scholar of the game as he picked our own Phil Vickery as the man to watch this year in an England shirt. Come on Clive Woodward start reading the Guardian and pick our Phil, he's a good 'un from Glaws.

Gloucester v Wakefield, 6th February 1998

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# Player Profile

## Craig Emmerson



Craig Emmerson could well be better known to tonight's respected visitors from Wakefield than most of the Gloucester players. Before he wandered westwards he had a fairly peripatetic start to his career in the North, playing for West Hartlepool, Halifax and Morley, so the Wakefield lads may have come across him in one or other of

his previous incarnations. And he did join another club. Who was it now? Oh yes! Some outfit called Harlequins. Our favourite memory of the highly promising young centre (and certainly his own) has to be that blistering break he made, from around his own 22, in last year's Cup semi final against Leicester. He went right through everyone, and very nearly got to the line himself. A try resulted, and so nearly put us into the Final that it was heartbreaking. Not least, I imagine, for Craig himself. I've no doubt that there will be other, similar, occasions. He has too much talent for things to be otherwise. That has been obvious to good judges for quite a while, ever since he won six England Caps at U19 level. He certainly had a baptism of fire when he played his first game for Gloucester. It was against Bath, here at Kingsholm.

Craig is 27 years old. He weighs a very respectable 83 kg. And stands only a whisker under 6 feet tall. He lives with his partner, Shana, and is into quizzes and crosswords when he isn't playing or training.

He says his 'most admired player' is Scott Benton, which I find slightly unusual, because most players cite someone who plays in the same position as they do when asked that question. But then, some of his answers are slightly inclined to the offbeat. For example, he quotes his favourite colours as 'pink and lavender', which isn't exactly the most macho combination one can think of. He also says his favourite food is rollmops, which sounds a bit fishy to me.

Craig is certainly an extremely interesting player to watch - big, strong and quick with it. I have a feeling that we haven't seen the best of him yet.

A pleasure still to come.



Gloucester vs Wakefield, 6th February 1998





Friday 6th February 1998

Kick-off 7.45pm

## GLOUCESTER

Cherry & White

## WAKEFIELD

Black & Gold quarters

15	AUDLEY LUMSDEN	Full Back	GREG MILLER	15
14	CRAIG EMMERSON	Right Wing	PAUL WHITE	14
13	SIMON WARD	Centre	MARK WOODWARD	13
12	MARTIN ROBERTS	Centre	NEIL SUMMERS	12
11	MIKE LLOYD	Left Wing	RICHARD THOMPSON	11
10	NICK OSMAN	Outside Half	DAVE SCULLY	10
9	IAN SANDERS	Scrum Half	ALEX BIRKBY	9
1	TONY WINDO	Prop	ROD LATHAM	1
2	CHRIS FORTEY	Hooker	KEITH BROOKING	2
3	ANDY DEACON	Prop	DEAN HARDCASTLE	3
4	RICHARD WARD	Lock	SIMON CROFT	4
5	MARK CORNWELL	Lock	PAUL STEWART	5
6	STEVE OJOMOH *	Flanker	GLEN WILSON	6
7	PETE GLANVILLE capt	Flanker	KERN YATES	7
8	SIMON DEVEREUX	No. 8	MATT GREENWOOD	8
16	MIKE DAVIS	Replacements	IAN BREWENY	16
17	LAURIE BECK		PHIL MAYNARD	17
18	ADEY POWLES		PHIL LANCASTER	18
19	NEIL MCCARTHY		TERENCE GARNETT	19
20	SAM PEARMAN		JON SKURR	20
21	ED MALLET		MARK SOWERBY	21
22				

Referee

NIGEL YATES  
(RFU MANCHESTER)

(I) International  
\* Captain

Touch Judges

GEOFF WARREN (RFU)  
CHRIS THOMAS (RFU)