



COACHES











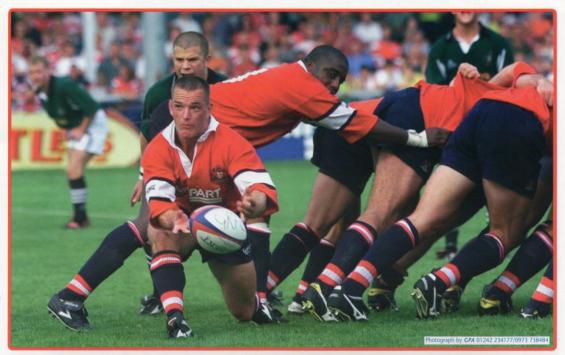












Elton Moncrieff

might not be a typical "high profile" southern hemisphere signing – but the Kiwi scrum-half has already earned the respect of the Gloucester faithful.

The first time they got a real opportunity to see Moncrieff was back last May in an Anglo-Welsh friendly with Swansea.

Not content with dominating the plays, he also scored a try, three penalties and four conversions and went agonisingly close with a penalty attempt from the half-way line!

On the strength of this performance (together with a similar story from a United game-a few days earlier), coach Philippe Saint-André decided that Moncrieff and Simon Mannix should renew their successful half-back partnership – they played together for Wellington in 1993 and 1994.

Elton wasn't quite sure what to expect when he first came over. "I didn't know what it would be like and how much I'd have to adapt. We won both the games I played in and everyone went out there determined to enjoy themselves and that definitely helped!"

He had been looking to play overseas and the Gloucester connection was made through his manager. By coincidence it gave him the chance to reacquaint himself with his former playing partner.

"I was looking to play perhaps in Japan, France or England. I didn't know at first that Simon was playing here, that was a bonus! He's a good player and makes it easier to play inside."

Elton has represented the All Blacks at every level except full international and has also played in the Super 12 for Canterbury Crusaders and Queensland Reds.

"You can't really compare the Super 12 and the Premiership – you play 11 games in the Super 12 and there are 20-odd league games and the European games as well. The weather also makes it very different. The style isn't that much different – the Premiership will get faster and harder when the World Cup ends."

Moncrieff feels that coming to Kingsholm was a good move.

"The team spirit at Gloucester is very good, it usually is in a rugby team but even more so here – especially seeing as you've got people from all over the show!

"The coaching is very good – from strength coach Ed and fitness coach Finchy to John Brain and Philippe. Everyone knows what they want."

Not too surprisingly, he has also noticed that the Cherry and Whites have quite a vocal following, "The fans are superb. I got a chance to watch the Leicester game from the crowd because I was out injured. It's a huge crowd and it was amazing! I have noticed it from the pitch as well – people are supportive. All they want is to see the boys put in a decent effort. They're paying money to watch after all."

Moncrieff is another player who pours water on the 'can't win away' problem which, after three away wins this season, might just be a thing of the past.

"It's all about the players' attitude towards the other team, home or away. The boys can gee themselves up and not struggle at home, it doesn't matter where, it's just a piece of grass. If we lose and we've given it our best shot then that's all you can ask for."

The well-travelled Kiwi doesn't know how long he'll be staying at Kingsholm, "At this stage I have a contract for two years. I hope to stay on longer, I'm keen to stay on longer and I'm just getting into the swing of things."

By yet another coincidence, Moncrieff and his wife Andrea were born in the same hospital and were delivered by the same doctor, although five days apart. They also attended the same primary school – St Theresa's in Wellington. They have two boys, Hayden aged 5 and Matthew aged 2.

Moncrieff's talents aren't confined to the rugby pitch – he is also a pretty mean artist and enjoys making his own furniture. "Rather than buying I reckoned I should make it. So I got hold of some wood and away I went. I like making coffee tables, TV cabinets and bookcases – that sort of thing."

Will there be a new line of Moncrieff furniture in the Club Shop soon?

THE LINE UP

As at 10 Feb 2000

15 Jim MALLINDER

14 Matt MOORE

13 Jos BAXENDELL

12 Andy BLYTH

11 Steve HANLEY

10 Niki LITTLE

9 Craig TURVEY

7 Alex SANDERSON

8 Andrew MORRIS

6 Pete ANGLESEA

5 Neil FLETCHER

4 Guy MANSON-BISHOP

3 Dawie THERON

2 Phil GREENING

7 Paul SMITH

SALE SHARKS

Coaches: Adrian Hadley (Director of Rugby), Jim Mallinder, Steve Diamond

ON THE BENCH TODAY

Christian SAVERIMUTTO Barrie-Jon MATHER Steve DAVIDSON Jo SHAW Duncan BELL Joe CLARK Richard WILKS

MATCH OFFICIALS Referee: Brian Campsall Touch Judges: David Grasshoff, Tom Ashworth

GLOUCESTER

SQUAD LIST

Laurie BECK

Tom BEIM

Chris CATLING

Andy DEACON

Joe EWENS

Terry FANOLUA

Rob FIDLER

Chris FORTEY

Byron HAYWARD

Brian JOHNSON

Ian JONES

Kingsley JONES

Simon MANNIX

Neil McCARTHY

Steve OJOMOH

Junior PARAMORE

Ed PEARCE

Adey POWLES

Ian SANDERS

Phil VICKERY

Trevor WOODMAN

Chris YATES

If you would like to become a referee please call 0800 834 551 Have a great time but please consider our neighbours and leave the club quietly, disposing of litter in the bins provided around the ground. Thanks

