

Gloucester

v CARDIFF

17th March 1999

Kick Off 7.45pm

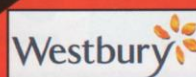
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**Inside:
John Fidler**

Kingsley Jones Interview

**Letters from the Net
and more...**



From the Team Manager

It gives me great pleasure to welcome Cardiff RFC to Kingsholm this evening for this rearranged fixture. The game was due to be played on Saturday 27th March but on that day Cardiff are involved in their domestic cup competition and Gloucester will now travel to Bedford in the Allied Dunbar Premiership League.

Cardiff's reputation goes before them as they have always been one of the leading clubs not only in Wales but all over the world. They are respected wherever they go. Tonight Gloucester field a relatively young side that contains some very promising players and I am sure they will rise to the occasion this evening and put up a good performance in what I am sure will be a

very competitive and exciting match.

Whilst talking about a Welsh club I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Graham Henry and his Welsh team for a fantastic victory in France last weekend. I watched the game on television in my hotel in Dublin and I have to say it was one of the best five nations games I have ever watched - it gave us all great appetite to go and watch the Ireland v England encounter later that afternoon. I feel with the performances in France and in Dublin that northern hemisphere rugby is improving and I am sure our teams will compete well in the forthcoming World Cup competition.

It was nice to have a little bit of luck in the quarter-final of the Tetley Bitter Cup, in being awarded a penalty in injury time.

This was successfully kicked by Tofty and gave

Gloucester a well-earned victory and a place in the semi-final. I am sure that, like me, you are all waiting for the game away at Wasps. As I mentioned previously we owe Wasps one, as the two games home and away this season have been very close. I feel confident that if Gloucester perform well it is a game we can win in order to progress to the final. It should be a great day out on Easter Sunday for all the supporters of the club and hopefully we will have a large number of supporters at Loftus Road to cheer the team on.

We are again in the semi-final of the Cheltenham and Gloucester Cup and I would like to congratulate the team that went away to Waterloo last weeked and achieved a well-earned victory. It was very nice to win away! The Waterloo victory now gives us a home semi-final draw against Sale which will be played on Sunday 21st march - kick off at 3pm.

For those of you who have been racing this week I hope the horses have been kind to you and that you have not lost too much money and I hope you all enjoy the game this evening

John Fidler



Peter Arnold

It's Been Far Too Long

Every season has its highs and lows, this one more than most as far as Gloucester is concerned. There isn't any doubt that tonight's little soiree represents one of the highs.

Along with Bristol, Gloucester used to be able to claim the best Anglo-Welsh fixture lists in the country, and the loss of that was part of the price we've had to pay for today's league structure. However, I'm prepared to bet that, should Shedhead run a referendum on which Welsh side Gloucester supporters would most welcome on a regular basis, there would be a sizeable majority for Cardiff.

The Gloucester v. Cardiff fixture goes back a very long way. There was a time when you would have had difficulty getting a car up Worcester Street through the crowds ambling on their way to that encounter. You had to get along early to have a chance of getting in, and even then you'd find benches lined up inside the rails to accommodate the crowd, and policemen shoving everyone along so as to squeeze as many people into the ground as possible.

We shall never see that sort of thing again, if only because of modern fire and safety regulations, but it's certain that visits from the principality's most

respected side on a regular basis would generally attract a very good gate.

I note that Rob Howley has been calling for a return to unity in the Welsh game following the win over France in Paris. I don't pretend to understand the finer points of the warfare going on between Cardiff, Swansea and the Welsh RFU, nor is it any of my business, but it's ironic that, had all been sweetness and light, we wouldn't have been able to welcome Cardiff here this evening. We'll await events.

There is an enormous wealth of mythology concerning fixtures between our two great clubs. Buttonhole any senior Gloucester supporter, buy him a pint and get him to reminisce, and he's certain to regale you with one or two yarns about games against Cardiff.

Not that we won very often down at the Arms park. In fact, at one time, there was a saying that Cardiff could turn out fifteen men with wooden legs and they'd still beat Gloucester. Not too many years ago, however, we did put 35 points on them in a one-off away fixture. Another fond memory concerns Gloucester's nickname. In the days before the 'Cherry and Whites', when everyone knew Gloucester as the 'Elver Eaters', Cardiff supporters had their own cognomen. They

used to call us 'the Pigs'. Oddly enough, they weren't being rude. It was a reference to the Gloucester Old Spot Pig which was held in high regard in that part of the world.

I'm not even going to attempt to sum up either team's chances this evening. This being an international weekend, not to mention the C&G cup semi final against Sale looming on the horizon, it's not easy to guess about team selection, so the whole exercise would be pointless.

Which is more than you can say about the game itself. What we can do is welcome tonight's respected visitors most sincerely, and ask them not to leave it so long between visits in the future.

Just one more thought. Trust Gloucester to play a Welsh side on St Patrick's Day.



THE A TEAM

In the welter of reports on the Five Nations, the controversial Scotland v. Italy game, the C&G Cup and their various other rugby-related stories, the performance of England A versus their Irish counterparts has been largely passed over. In case you missed it, the English side - which involved a whole clutch of Gloucester players - won the game by 28 points to 33, having scored all their points in less than 40 minutes.

Such reports as I did read were pretty disparaging about the English performance, one going so far as to praise Ireland for their attacking flair in the second half, although playing into the teeth of a strong wind. This, of course, entirely ignores the fact that England must have been facing the same conditions in the first half.

Nevertheless, it's impossible to disguise the fact that our boys done good, contributing 23 of England's points. Quite apart from all that, it was very nice to read that Andy Deacon at last earned an England A shirt, coming on as replacement. Chris Catling gave a nudge in the direction of messrs. Perry and Beal by scoring a try, but the honours of the match must go to Mark Mapletoft. He converted all four England tries, as one would expect, but also scored two of them

himself, and had a hand in both of the others. His own tries were both long-range efforts, scored within about five minutes of each other.

By my arithmetic, Toffy has now contributed 35 points in two England A appearances this season, and that makes one wonder just how long Clive Woodward can go on ignoring this rate of points scoring. Speaking on BBC TV after the England v Ireland game the other Saturday, Jonathan Davies deplored the lack of creativity at No.10 and advocated moving the excellent Jonni Wilkinson up to fly-half to provide it.

Well - there is an alternative. If it's creativity you're after, you need look no further than Mr Mapletoft of Gloucester. After all, whatever his weaknesses, he's never short of that.

...AND WELL DONE GARETH!

Talking about the representative matches, did you notice that our own Gareth Cooper scored the only try in Wales U21's narrow win over France? Yet another name to watch out for.



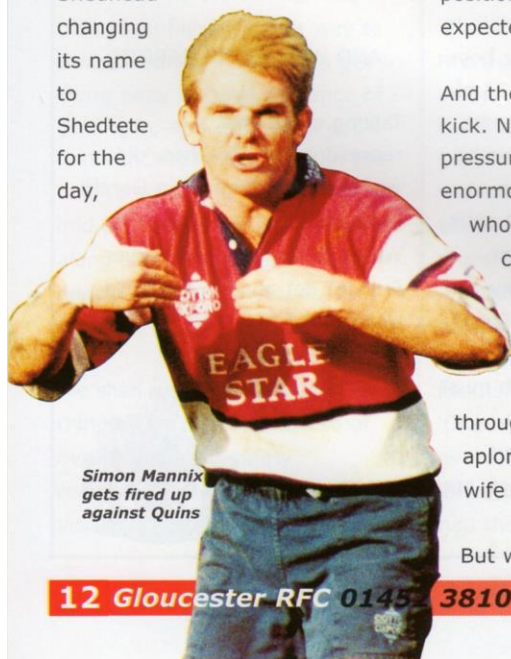
Back to Basics

Peter Arnold

My wife says that that if I were any more laid back I'd fall over, but even I must admit to being both shaken and stirred by the events in the Tetley Bitter Cup QF against Quins the other week.

Even before I entered the ground I could feel it. There was that indefinable aura of a great Kingsholm occasion, pervading not only the ground, but the pubs, shops and streets all around the surrounding area. The Kingsholm faithful will know what I mean. There is an atmosphere unique to such occasions, very much part of the 'Glawster' mythos, but so sadly lacking for much of this season.

Inside the ground the mood lightened somewhat. With the Tricoleurs flying around the stands, the Lydbrook band belting out 'La Marseillaise' and even Shedhead changing its name to Shedtete for the day,



Simon Mannix gets fired up against Quins

any stranger could have been pardoned for wondering if he had somehow wandered off to Dax or Biarritz by mistake.

The game, of course, was hardly a classic. Cup matches seldom are. Gloucester won it by countering a highly proficient opposing side with the old-fashioned Kingsholm virtues of rugged persistence, head down determination and what Stuart Barnes would call 'West Country Dog'.

Pretty it wasn't, but who in their right minds would play to Harlequins strengths in such circumstances? Thierry Lacroix, on the Quins bench for the day, remarked on Channel 4 that Harlequins controlled the game for eighty minutes and just lost in injury time. Personally, I think he overstates his case, but in his position, he can hardly be expected to be impartial, can he?

And then came that final penalty kick. Not a difficult one, but the pressure must have been enormous. It was as though the whole Gloucester season had crystallised down to one, diamond-hard point. Real Boy's Own Paper stuff.

Yet up strolled Tofty and put the ball straight through the centre with all the aplomb in the world. And my wife says I'm laid back!

But what an occasion!

Blink and you'd have missed him!

At least Neil McCarthy got on the field at Lansdowne Rd. It's probably the shortest international appearance by a Gloucester player, but at least Neil will be able to tell his grandchildren that he played for England against Ireland in 1999, and that England won. It was no surprise that Neil's participation was so short-lived. It would take more than an Irish boot to the noggin to keep R. Cockerill esq. off the field for more than two minutes.

Pity really. Neil must have felt pretty confident, in a deja vu sort of way. He had, after all, hooked against Keith Wood twice in the previous three weeks, and performed with considerable credit, too. Anything can happen in this game, of course, and it is to be hoped that Neil McCarthy's 'now you see him now you don't' appearance for England is just an appetiser for longer and better things

Spring Sale

As I say: anything can happen: and at Gloucester, it already has. We may be entering the latter stages of a horribly frustrating season, but here we are, on March 17 with teams in no less than three cup semi-finals.

The Tetley Bitter Cup Semi-Final against Wasps is scheduled for Easter Sunday (April 4) away at Loftus Rd, unfortunately. Our highly proficient Colts side defied the pundits by beating the fancied Canterbury outfit very handily. I do suspect that they have a tough one in the semi, however, being asked to travel to Leeds.

The senior side learned a little about Leeds a couple of weeks ago in the C&G Cup, and they are obviously a well-organised club. They have the avowed intention of becoming the centre of excellence for the whole of Yorkshire, have the facilities of Leeds Rhinos Rugby League Club to call upon, and it's only to be expected that a strong Colts dimension is a vital part of their ambitions. So Gloucester Colts have a tough proposition to handle. Nevertheless, they could well be worth having a quid or so on.

Finally, and most important because of its imminence, is Gloucester v. Sale in the Cheltenham and Gloucester Cup

semi-final next weekend, or thereabouts.

That won't be an easy one, but at least it is to be played at Kingsholm rather than Heywood Rd. Manchester Sale, as we must remember to call them these days, have had an up and down season, but are now beginning to show the sort of form which their squad list promises. Furthermore, they have the excellent John Mitchell in charge.

However, I suppose that the overriding factor is the relative strength of the sides each club can send on to the field. England A commitments, plus the likely non-availability of Neil McCarthy, not to mention the occasional England U21 player will just about decimate the Gloucester side, and leave Philippe Saint-André with severely limited options. In addition, the current injury list is acquiring indecent proportions

Sale will be affected by international calls as well, of course. There will be no Shane Howarth, David Rees or Dion O'Cuinneagain, for example, but they don't look to be as badly hit as Gloucester. You will probably have seen the squad list for the game by the time you read this, but I would imagine it will include such performers as Jos Baxendell, one of the few summer tourists to emerge with

any credit, Jim Mallinder, and even, possibly, our old oppo Graham Dawe.

And wouldn't it be interesting if Phil Greening turned up! Perhaps it's just as well that Neil McCarthy has a previous engagement elsewhere. Under similar circumstances Manchester Sale put 52 points on Northampton in the Quarter-Finals, but a depleted Northampton is no match for a depleted Gloucester, especially at Kingsholm. You might also like to consider what a young, green Newcastle side did to a Bath team featuring nine internationals.

What we need is a few thousand supporters doing their thing on that day. Do come along and exercise your vocal cords.



TAILPIECE

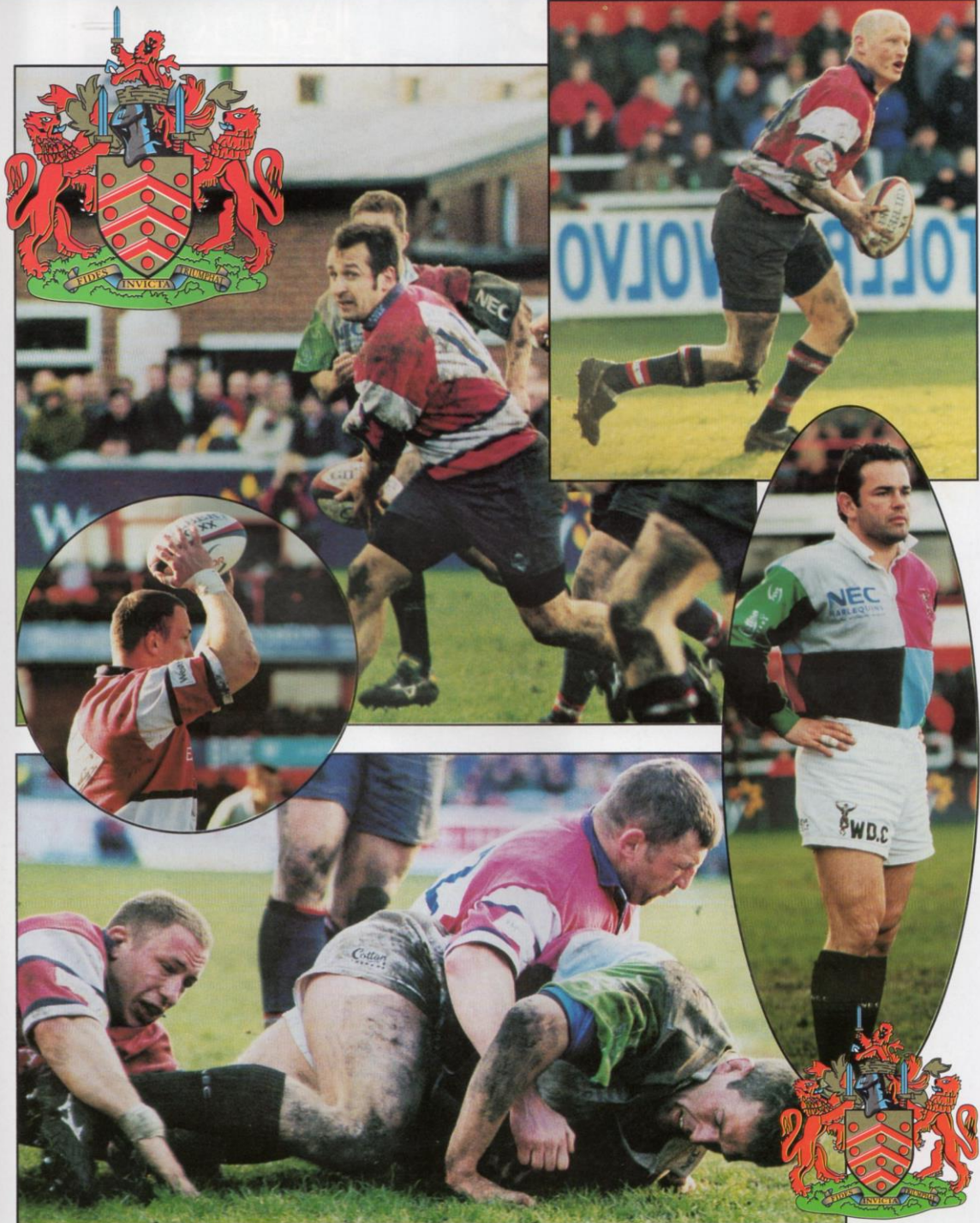
I notice that Thierry Lacroix is tipping Wasps to beat Gloucester in the Tetley Bitter Semi-Final

However, he also gave Ireland to beat England and France to beat Wales. Hopefully, his run of form will continue.

Action Special



Glos v Harlequins



Kingsley Jones Interview



He may not have been the most regular face in the Gloucester team, but the name of Kingsley Jones ought to be well known to Cherry and White fans. If it isn't, it should be. The former (and perhaps future) Welsh captain came to Kingsholm in December, disenchanted with the state of Welsh rugby. "The uncertainty in the Welsh club scene is one of the reasons I wanted to leave," he says. So, he came, he saw and he played brilliantly for a few games and then... nothing. What happened, Kingsley?

"We were playing against Wasps and when we went in at half time I could feel my calf was a bit tight. In fact, I'd felt it earlier when I went in the sin bin. That wasn't very clever - there was a bit of handbags with one of their players. Anyway, I played for most of the second half and about fifteen minutes from the end put all my energy into sprinting for a loose ball on the floor and it felt as if someone had kicked me from behind. I looked round and there was no-one there. There wasn't a great deal of pain but I knew something was wrong because my foot was flapping up and down. When I went to walk I collapsed; I didn't know which way it was pointing. Chris the physio was excellent: he was on the field in a matter of

minutes. I had an appointment with a specialist at 8.30 the next day who diagnosed a ruptured achilles tendon and four hours later he'd sewn it up again.

"At the time I was devastated; after all, it's a world cup year and I may never have the opportunity to play in another world cup, and this one's in Wales. I haven't given up hope of playing in this world cup - so much can happen so quickly in rugby. Things can change in a week. You can go from being out of the squad to playing or being captain even; I was dropped and was made captain three weeks later.

"Wales are playing well at the moment; they had a very good win at the weekend. I was over in France watching it with Philippe and a lot of Frenchmen! I haven't given up hope of getting in the squad for the world cup. I'm well ahead of where I should be in terms of my recovery at the moment. All along, they've said I should be better in May or June, which really means that I won't be able to play any rugby before the competition. If I were to recover a month earlier, I'd be able to get some games under my belt, which I really need to do as far as Wales are concerned. At least I would be able to throw my hat in the ring in terms of selection. It may well be that in 8 weeks or so I could be fit and

Kingsley Jones Interview

with only four first choice back rows Gloucester may well want me to play or to appear on the bench."

Is there any reason why so many Gloucester players are getting injured at the moment?

"It's just the way the game is being played now. There are a lot more double hits which is a strategy the southern hemisphere sides employ very well. I

remember the first Super 12 final between Auckland and Natal. It was like watching mini-rugby: the side who had the ball were going backwards because of this offensive defence. The southern hemisphere sides have been playing that way for four or five years and now the northern hemisphere sides are catching up. If you have someone hit you high and someone else come in and hit you low, you might well tear your cruciate."

Is fear of injury the reason you wear a headguard?

"I've suffered for a while with scrum pox or herpes simplex. I split the left side of my face open about six years ago playing against Penarth. I had stitches and my glands came up and it went septic. Since then, every time I cut the left side of my face or graze it, it goes a bit septic. Since I've been wearing the scrum cap it's improved no end. I get it maybe about twice

a season, just a little whereas before I was getting it every six weeks."

What sort of training have you been doing while you've been injured?

"I fortunately bought a rubber welly. It covered my cast and it works like a vacuum pump sucking on to the cast so that means I've been able to swim. I've also been doing a lot of weights: perhaps too much. I need to slow down. I've put on about 8kg in weight and this has all come from weight training rather than from being a fat person. As soon as I start running, I'll lose that."

So, do you have a final message to the fans?

"I think they're great. For example, after the final whistle in the Quins game when the players were going round the crowd I wished it was me. But, I told Nathan Carter that I'd be back for the Tetley Cup Final so he'd better watch out... The supporters have been great to me and hopefully I'll pay them back tenfold when I start playing again. I'll try to entertain them as much as I can when I get back." We've heard *La Marseillaise* for Philippe - what price *Bread of Heaven* for Kingsley?

Martin Jones

K I N G S L E Y J O N E S



Nickname	Phil
Date of Birth	19 June 1970
Place of Birth	Nantyglo
Weight	98kg
Height	6'1"
Previous Club	Ebbw Vale

Position	Flanker (Blind or Openside)
Shirt No.	6 or 7
Caps	10 (Wales)
Most Admired Player	Mike Jones
Ambition for '99	Play in the Glos 1st XV Play for Wales in the World Cup
Interests	Motorcycles
Favourite Singer	Lighthouse Family
Favourite Film	The Life of Brian

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GLOUCESTER



CARDIFF



15 Simon Morgan
14 R. Greenslade-Jones
13 Stephen Ward
12 Mike Davis
11 Rob Jewell

10 Simon Mannix (c)
9 Laurie Beck

1 Andy Robinson
2 Chris Collins
3 Adey Powles
4 Adam Harris
5 Richard Ward
6 Andrew Eustace
7 Andy Hazell
8 Richard Stott

16 Dave Hinkins
17 Chris Hall
18 James Street
19 Ed Mallett
20 Nigel Cane
21 Martyn Kimber
22 Tom Beim

Full Back
Right Wing
Centre
Centre
Left Wing

Outside Half
Scrum Half

Prop
Hooker
Prop
Lock
Lock
Flanker
Flanker
No. 8

Replacements

*Denotes International

Justin Thomas 15
Gareth Thomas 14
Mike Hall 13
Matthew Wintle 12
Simon Hill 11

Lee Jarvis 10
Robert Jones 9

Spencer John 1
Paul Young 2
David Young (c) 3
John Tait 4
Steve Williams 5
Greg Kacala 6
Owain Williams 7
Emyr Lewis 8

Mike Rayer 16
Liam Botham 17
Robert Howley 18
Jamie Ringer 19
Derwyn Jones 20
Lyndon Mustoe 21
Andrew Lewis 22