

THE CITIZEN

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2000

BRAIN HAS THAT WINNING FEELING

FORWARDS COACH CLAIMS GLOUCESTER CAN BEAT
EUROPE'S BEST

John Brain last night spoke about the 'tingle' he will get when Gloucester stream out onto Stradey Park tonight to end their Heineken Cup exile.

The Gloucester forwards guru will ensure his charges have stoked up an intense fire for a mammoth physical confrontation with Llanelli in the early stages tonight, but he is confident Gloucester possess enough potency to defeat the cream of Europe.

"I must admit I will get a tingle when they come out tonight. I believe we can beat any club side anywhere when we play to our potential," Brain said.

"This is certainly one of the most talented Gloucester squads I have worked with.

"It will not be lost on anyone what tonight means and we will be pointing out to the players how important this game is and its significance in terms of the history of the club.

"It's Gloucester's first game in the Heineken Cup and that is very special. For the first 20 or 30 minutes it's not going to be for the faint-hearted and will be just like a typical England versus Wales encounter."

Brain has a slight hint of mischief and enjoyment in his voice, but the waiting is over as Gloucester go gunning for European glory in one of the biggest matches in their history.

Kingsley Jones will lead the Cherry and Whites and will make his first return to Wales since his arrival at Kingsholm.

Adam Eustace replaces Rob Fidler in the second row, while Terry Fanolua retains his place on the wing in place of Joe Ewens.

Adey Powles will have a painkilling injection in his ribs to take his place on the bench, while Serge Simon is recalled because of Philippe Saint-Andre's prop crisis.

"We will find out how good a team we are tonight," Brain insisted. "The players have worked very hard to address certain deficiencies since the start of the season in games like Bath and Wasps.

"We know what is required in our game to beat Llanelli and we want to go out and deliver that. It will be a unique feeling," he said.

Gloucester know they must stop Scott Quinnell from punching large holes in midfield and sucking in defenders because he will be the man around whom Llanelli pin their whole game.

"We don't want to lose the opportunity in this game. I really do believe if we stick to our game plan and play to our potential and get the mental and physical side right we can do well.

"But this is quite simply Llanelli's game of the season so far. They have been waiting all season for this game to come alive and show people what they can do," Brain said.

Gloucester will need some heroes amongst the forwards tonight, and Jones will be joined by Junior Paramore and Steve Ojomoh in the back row.

Andy Gomarsall and Simon Mannix form the half-back combination, while rampaging centre Chris Yates will be joined by Jason Little in midfield. Tom Beim and Fanolua are on the wings, with Chris Catling at full-back.

Meanwhile, Gloucester supporters have been advised by tournament organisers to leave plenty of time to get to Stradey Park because of possible traffic congestion.

LLANELLI

M. Cardey	15
M. Jones	14
D. James	13
S. Finau	12
G. Evans	11
S. Jones	10
G. Easterby	9
P. Booth	1
R. McBryde	2
J. Davis	3
C. Wyatt	4
C. Gillies	5
D. Jones	6
I. Boobyer	7
S. Quinnell (c)	8

Reps: M. Thomas, V. Cooper,
M. Buckingham, R. Moon,
N. Boobyer, A. Lawson,
A. N. Other.

GLOUCESTER

C. Catling
T. Beim
J. Little
C. Yates
T. Fanolua
S. Mannix
A. Gomarsall
S. Simon
O. Azam
P. Vickery
A. Eustace
I. Jones
S. Ojomoh
K. Jones (c)
J. Paramore

Reps: E. Moncrieff,
F. Schisano, S. Sanchez,
A. Powles, R. Fidler,
J. Boer, A. Hazell.

Referee: G. Morandin (Italy).

TV: BBC Wales; BBC Choice Wales (Sky Digital 965).