

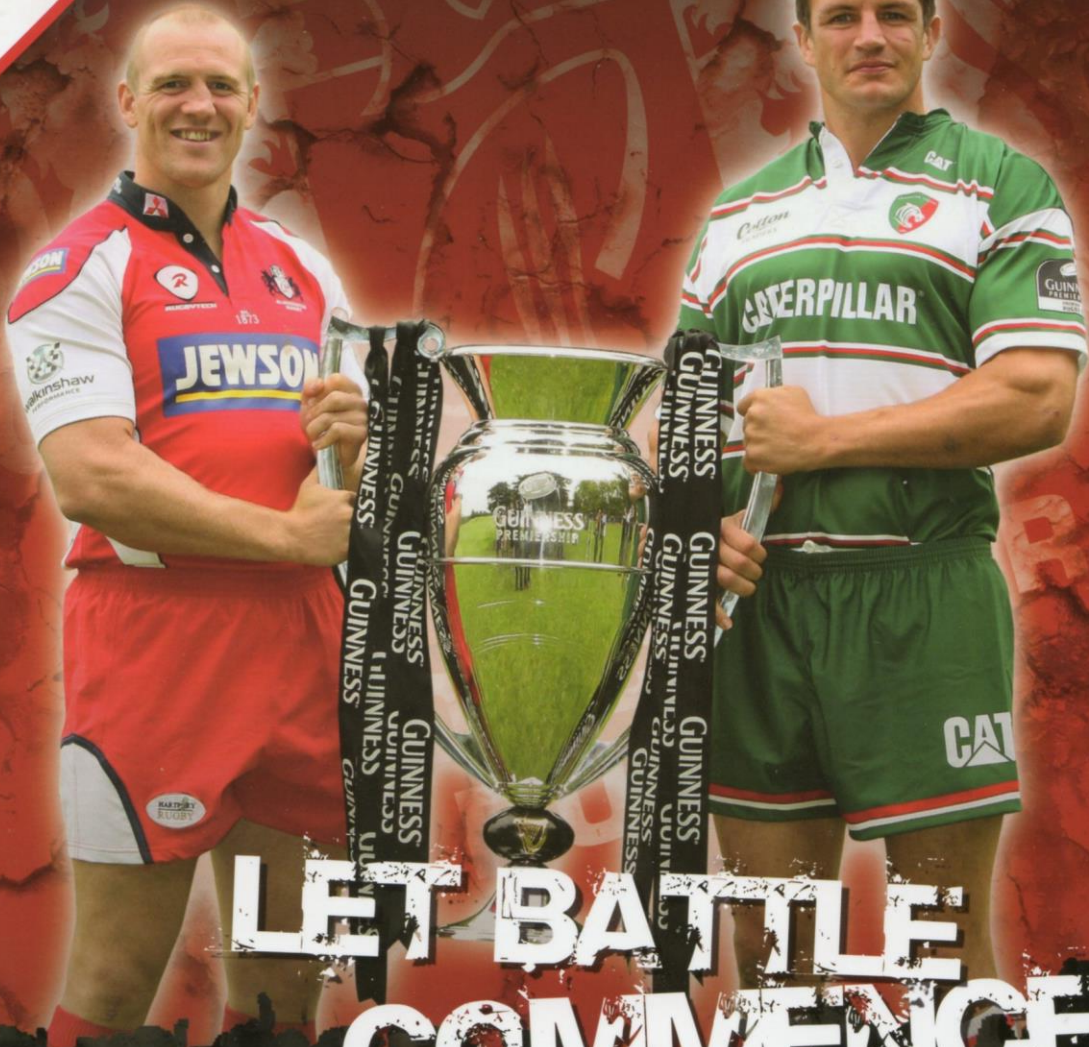


OFFICIAL MATCHDAY PROGRAMME OF GLOUCESTER RUGBY 2008/2009 ISSUE 01 • £3.00



Gloucester Rugby  
v Leicester Tigers

07.09.08 16.00



# LET BATTLE COMMENCE

**STEPHEN JONES**  
on Gloucester's charge

No greater Launch to a new season at **KINGSHOLM**

**INS AND OUTS**  
We round up all the summer  
comings and goings

**DEAN RYAN**  
On today's  
challenge



[www.guinnesspremiership.com](http://www.guinnesspremiership.com)





## CAPTAIN'S CORNER



I AM sure everyone will agree, it's a hell of a start to the season.

The Guinness Premiership returns to Kingsholm this afternoon with the visit of last season's beaten finalists Leicester Tigers – a fixture that has a tremendous history between two of the biggest clubs in the country.

There is no doubt we are ready. All the preparation has been completed, all the gruelling pre-season work done and we



**Last weekend we completed our pre-season with a comfortable victory over Glasgow. For many people, I am sure it will have been the first they will have seen the new ELV's in operation and although the game was disjointed, messy and contained some mistakes, I thought we dominated the game for long periods without really cutting loose and that is a positive sign because we will only get better.**

The Guinness Premiership is now in really good shape for the start of perhaps the biggest domestic season ever.

Not only does the Guinness Premiership threaten to be the best in its history, but the international season and the return

of the British Lions means the next 10 months are huge for the sport.

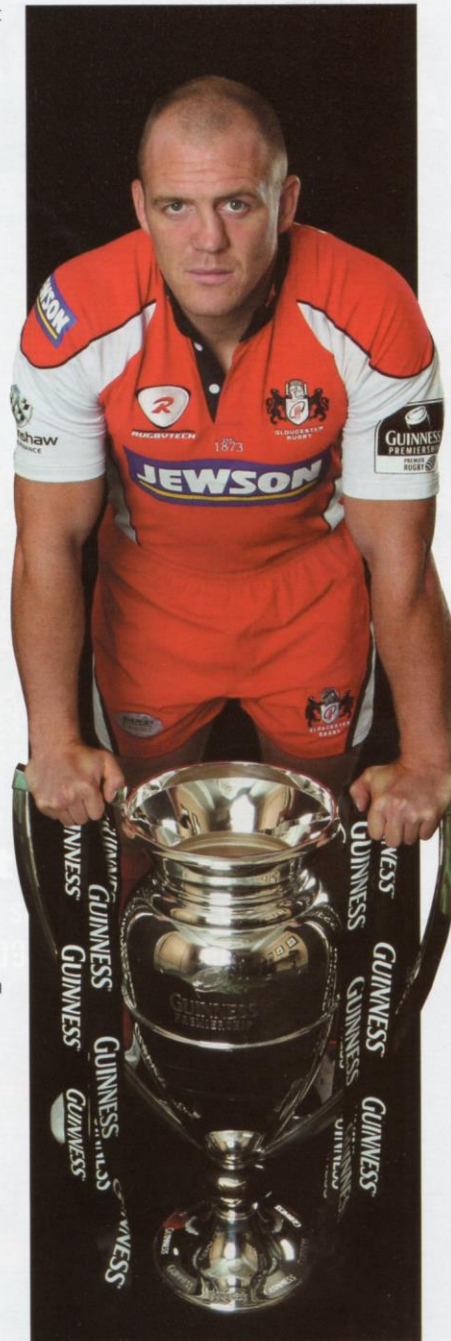
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We are still managing the interpretation of the new laws but were effective in many areas and will need to build on that this afternoon.

The last time Leicester were at Kingsholm, we controlled a Premiership semi-final for long periods before tossing the game away in the closing stages because we made too many errors. Against a side of Leicester's remorseless physicality and experience, you simply cannot do that and expect to win.

Today will be a tough examination for many reasons – but both teams will have a huge amount of respect for each other and I couldn't imagine a better way of launching the new season at Kingsholm.

A sell-out at Kingsholm is a pretty unique place to be so please get right behind the boys this afternoon and help us to the opening day victory we all crave.







## RYAN'S REVIEW



**There was a mixed a reaction to the performance and victory over Glasgow last weekend, how did you see it?**

**DR:** I THOUGHT we did a lot of things right. For me, we stayed pretty much within the game-plan we had devised and although certain aspects around the edges were not as clinical as we would have liked, I thought we dominated the game for long periods and could have grown the victory margin even further.

It's a shame, but probably inevitable, that interpretation in certain areas is making the game quite difficult. I've been saying all along that in the first five or six weeks it's going to be crucial how referees interpret certain aspects of the game. And certainly the breakdown area will allow things to be a little bit more disruptive than what we've been seeing.



**I think we have the building blocks in place to take our game forward and that was fairly evident last weekend. I thought our scrum operated well, we showed some ambition with the ball and got better at the contact area as the game went on.**

Overall, we did a lot of things pretty well. We would have liked a bit more dividend from our dominance but we tried our best to play the way we think the Premiership will be refereed. Maybe we won't be able to play as much as we'd like. Those are



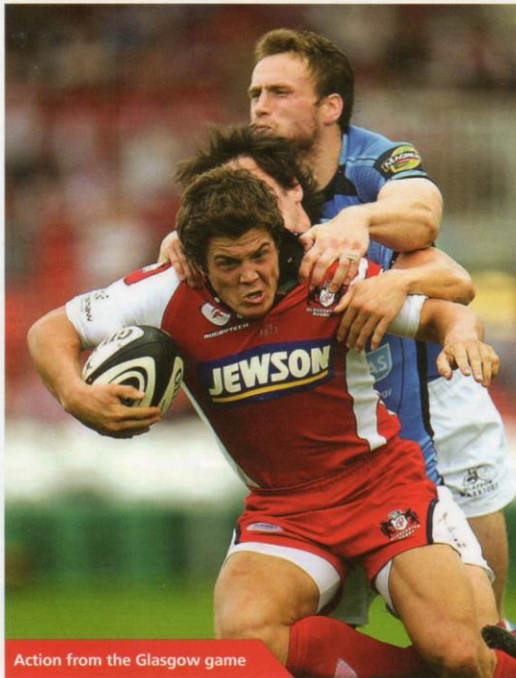
things we will have to take in and learn on the hoof.



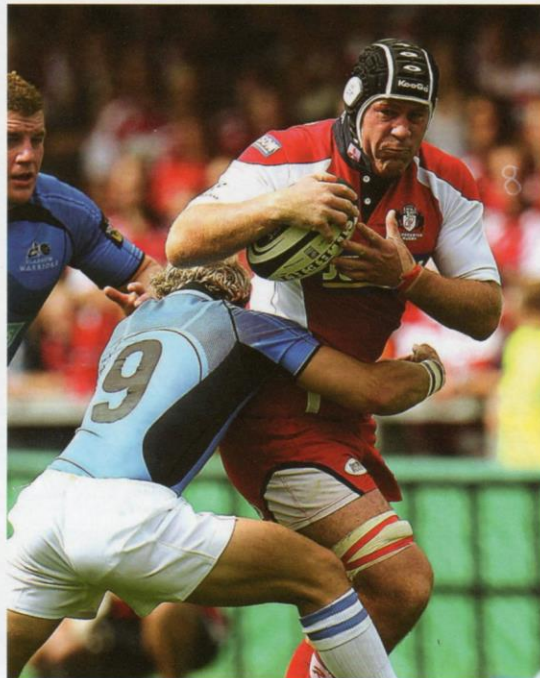
**How will you take that performance on today?**

**DR:** THAT'S not an easy thing to answer because we are yet to operate with a Guinness Premiership referee to any level. We had some assistance in pre-season but how that comes across in games is yet to be seen.

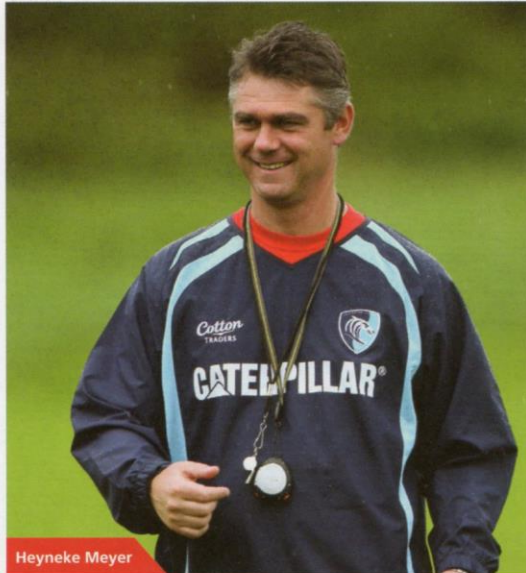
I think we have the building blocks in place to take our game forward and that was fairly evident last weekend. I thought our scrum operated well, we showed some ambition with the ball and got better at the contact area as the game went on. We know and appreciate what we will come up against today against an extremely well drilled and physical side.



Action from the Glasgow game







Heyneke Meyer



Apo Satala



**Was there a more difficult way to start the season?**

**DR:** COMING to Kingsholm will not be something that will be an issue for them. We lost two Premiership games at home last season and they were against Leicester both times. They have always been a forward thinking organisation because they are used to being successful, but they have undergone a fair amount of change this summer. However, the feedback I have come across about their new coach Heyneke Meyer has been very positive and he will bring a tremendous amount of experience with him.

We know Leicester are a very good side but in the Guinness Premiership semi-final, I felt we were the better team for long periods and that is something we must remember. Last season we showed consistently we are able to beat very good teams on a regular basis and that is important as we start the new season.

Any Gloucester-Leicester game, no matter what stage of the season they happen in, are huge matches and it will be a great way to launch the season at Kingsholm.



**Last week you gave a debut to Apo Satala, what is his situation?**

**DR:** APO is training with us on a regular basis and at the moment that is as far as it has gone. With the injuries we have picked up to key members in our back row, we maybe on the lookout for some temporary cover and Apo was available to train with us and we have been impressed.

He is a big man, very physical, and has gained some good experience with the Army Sevens side. We are just happy to see where it takes us at the moment but he certainly made an impact during the time he was on the field against Glasgow.



We know Leicester are a very good side but in the Guinness Premiership semi-final, I felt we were the better team for long periods and that is something we must remember. Last season we showed consistently we are able to beat very good teams on a regular basis and that is important as we start the new season.



# TODAY'S TEAMS

Sunday 7th September 16.00  
Gloucester Rugby v Leicester Tigers



**REPLACEMENTS**

- 16 AZAM
- 17 YOUNG
- 18 BROWN
- 19 HAZELL
- 20 COOPER
- 21 WALKER
- 22 BALSRAW

**REPLACEMENTS**

- 16 KAYSER
- 17 STANKOVICH
- 18 KAY
- 19 WOODS
- 20 DUPUY
- 21 VESTY
- 22 J. MURPHY

**Guinness Premiership Table**

Pos	Team	Pld	W	D	L	F	A	TF	TA	TB	LB	Pts
1	Bath Rugby	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	Bristol Rugby	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	Gloucester Rugby	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	Harlequins	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	Leicester Tigers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6	London Irish	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7	London Wasps	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8	Newcastle Falcons	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	Northampton Saints	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
10	Sale Sharks	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	Saracens	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
12	Worcester Warriors	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

**Today's Officials**

**Referee:** Dave Pearson

**Touch Judges:** Robin Goodliffe & Bruce Robertson

**4th:** Mark Tovey

**Replacement Ref:** Roy Maybank





# PERSONAL FILES

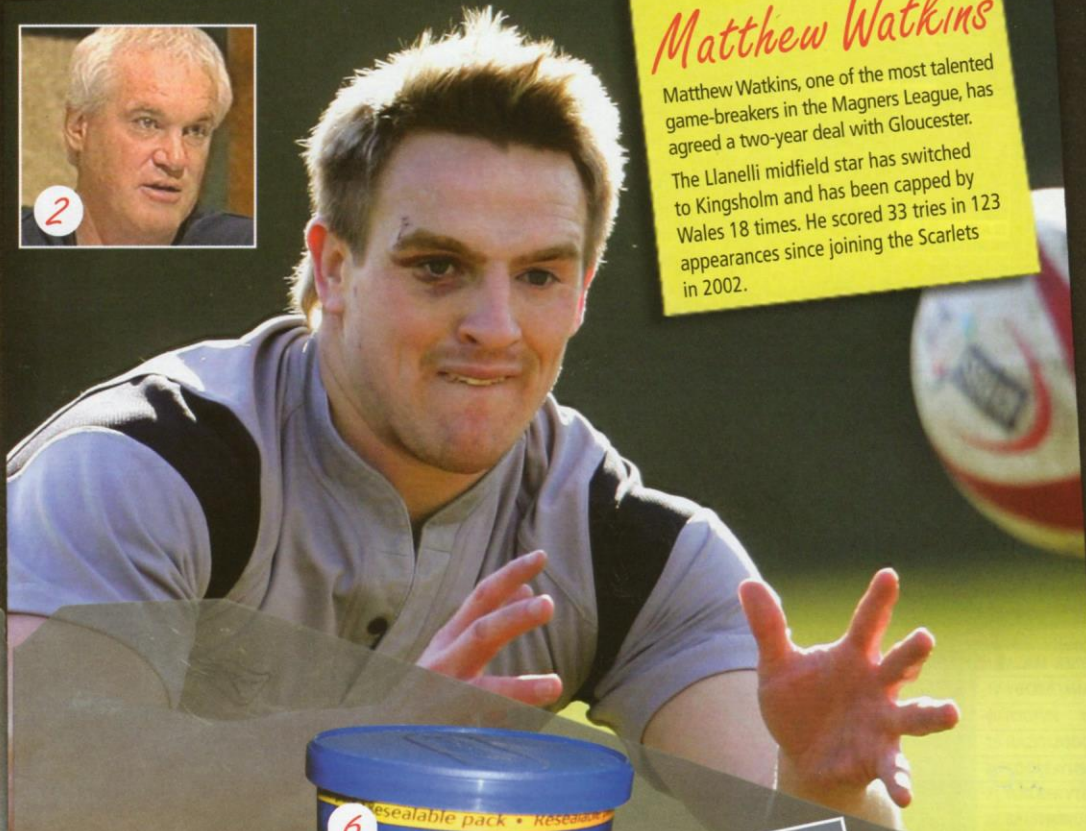
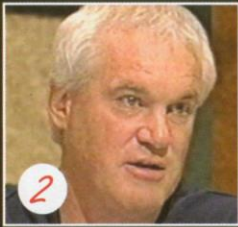
with Matthew Watkins



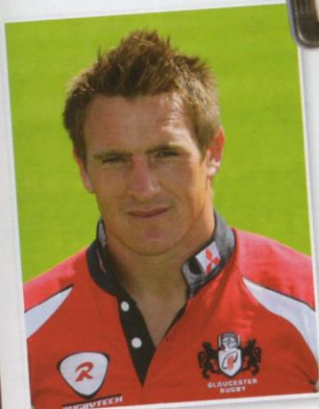
by Ian Randall

## Matthew Watkins

Matthew Watkins, one of the most talented game-breakers in the Magners League, has agreed a two-year deal with Gloucester. The Llanelli midfield star has switched to Kingsholm and has been capped by Wales 18 times. He scored 33 tries in 123 appearances since joining the Scarlets in 2002.







*1. What is the first match you remember watching?*

Probably Wales against Scotland. It was the Six Nations game when Ieuan Evans scored that wondrous try.

*2. Who is your sport's best pundit?*

As I'm Welsh, I'm going to have to say Eddie Butler. I think he talks a lot of sense.

*3. Can you explain cricket?*

Just about I think. I'm a big fan of the Twenty20 League now, I think everyone is now and I think I get by.

*4. Who has the flashiest motor at the club?*

Lesley Vainikolo by a mile. It's a big American truck. He drives around with a big petrol tank right behind him to fill it up all the time.

*5. If money was no object, what would be the first thing you would buy?*

Probably a house for my mother, because she's looked after me and I'd like to look after her a little bit.

*6. What's your favourite biscuit?*

Chocolate Hob Nobs. You can dunk them in your tea.

*7. Can you play a musical instrument?*

No chance! I was thinking about taking up the guitar at one point but I don't think I'd have the patience to be honest.

*8. If you could be in a band, which one would you choose?*

I don't know about a band. I'd have to be a rock star. They seem to have a pretty good life and get out and about a bit.

*9. Which 2 of your team mates would you want with you on a quiz team?*

It's hard to say. The boys are pretty dull to be honest but I'd say Jango... he sounds intelligent which is something...and maybe Barks.

*10. What was the last book you read?*

I think it would have been Paul Gascoigne's autobiography. It's brilliant, he didn't hold back on anything and it was a really good read.

*11. Has your sport ever brought you to tears?*

A couple of injuries nearly have brought me to tears. I ruptured my ankle ligaments and broke my leg about ten years ago. I had a couple of close calls in finals but I don't think I cried.

*12. What's the most common mistake you see people making in your sport?*

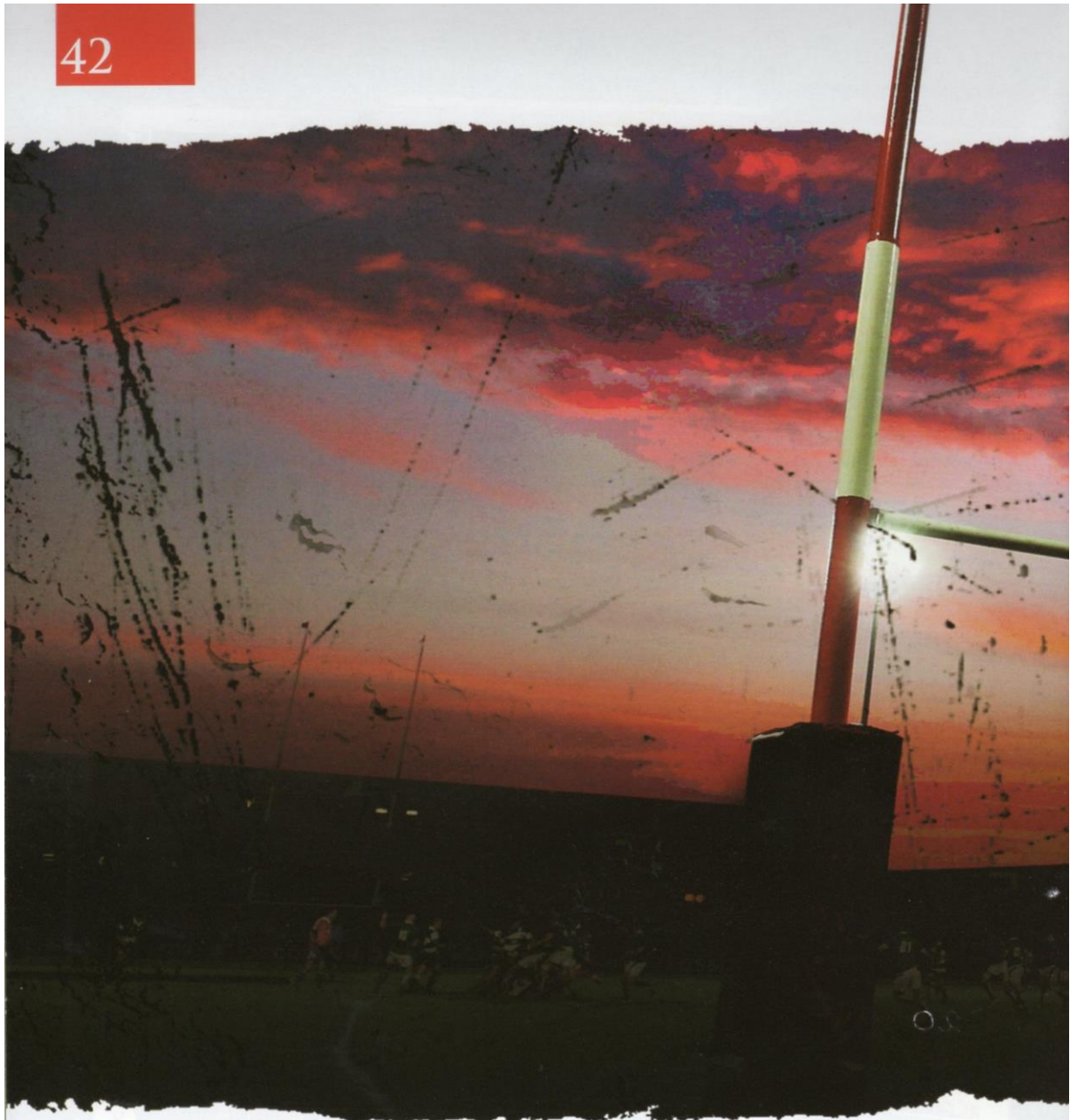
Over complicating the game I think, it's an easy game, get the ball, keep it and score. I think you can over complicate the game.


*13. Where in the world is the best night out?*

I've had some good nights out! Las Vegas was good with my wife, and anytime I'm with the boys we have a good night out.







 Gloucester have the domestic season off by heart, it's just the little bit on the end that has caused the problem, but as Stephen Jones of the Sunday Times reports today, it surely has to be Gloucester's year – just watch out for the fans' forum.



# KNOW YOUR ENEMY



## KNOW YOUR ENEMY



ONE OF the most frightening experiences of my career took place at Kingsholm a few years ago when I was asked to a forum by the Gloucester supporters' association. It was billed as myself and a select group of famous writing celebrities fielding pleasant questions from a respectful few dozen mild-mannered Gloucester fans.

It turned out that the questions were ferocious and asked by a massive avenging horde of about 3000 devilish Gloucester denizens, several of whom had clearly spent several months in the pub before they arrived. As for the extensive panel, this comprised of only myself and Alastair Downey, then of the Gloucester Citizen, sister paper of the New York Times, and now Gloucester's press officer.

Downey fielded one easy question and in his answer he took the precaution of praising everything and everyone at Gloucester to the skies and drew a standing ovation after four sentences. But after the meeting had been in process for two minutes, it was announced that Downey had to leave to play in a skittles match. He left to a generous round of applause for his two minutes' worth, leaving me eyeing the crowd.

We re-started with what I assumed was a simply question from the back of the hall, something about my opinion of Rob Andrew. I launched into a long hymn of praise for the great man, his brilliant England career and his part in establishing the Newcastle Falcons club in the football heartland of the North-East.

In the hall, muttering grew into a growling as I continued the fulsome tribute. The chairman was sitting next to me. "Don't forget we hate him here and he called us a bunch of racists and we are all taking him to court," he whispered.

The next question concerned John Fidler. "Why did you hint in a recent article that John Fidler was in some way a dirty player?" Realisation was dawning. "On the contrary," I said solemnly. "Saint John Fidler



**The questions came thick and fast. "Which is the best ground?" I said that it was Kingsholm. And the best owner? Tom Walkinshaw. The best meat pies in the world? At Kingsholm. Best team ever? Gloucester. Most handsome fans? In the Shed. Best ever prop in the history of rugby? Andy Deacon. Greatest player ever to tie a boot, in any position? Andy Deacon.**



was the finest, most upstanding, cleanest, greatest lock and vicar I ever saw play." Heads nodded in agreement.

The questions came thick and fast. "Which is the best ground?" I said that it was Kingsholm. And the best owner? Tom Walkinshaw. The best meat pies in the world? At Kingsholm. Best team ever? Gloucester. Most handsome fans? In the Shed. Best ever prop in the history of rugby? Andy Deacon. Greatest player ever to tie a boot, in any position? Andy Deacon.

By this time, every utterance I made was greeted with tumultuous applause, and as I left to go to my car at the end of the evening, with a brown envelope in my pocket (it contained a season ticket for Longlevens) the car park was lined with clapping and cheering fans.

Well, it pays to give your audience what they want. Towards the end of last season I had a letter from a group of four Gloucester fans wanting The Sunday Times to launch a campaign to abandon the concept of the play-offs and the Guinness Final so that the champion club of the year would once again be the one which topped the table at the end of the regular season.

Today's game would bring back horrible memories of the game that Gloucester should have won at the end of last season, against Leicester in the play-offs. The team had come so far, and topped the table and then were robbed of their shot at destiny.

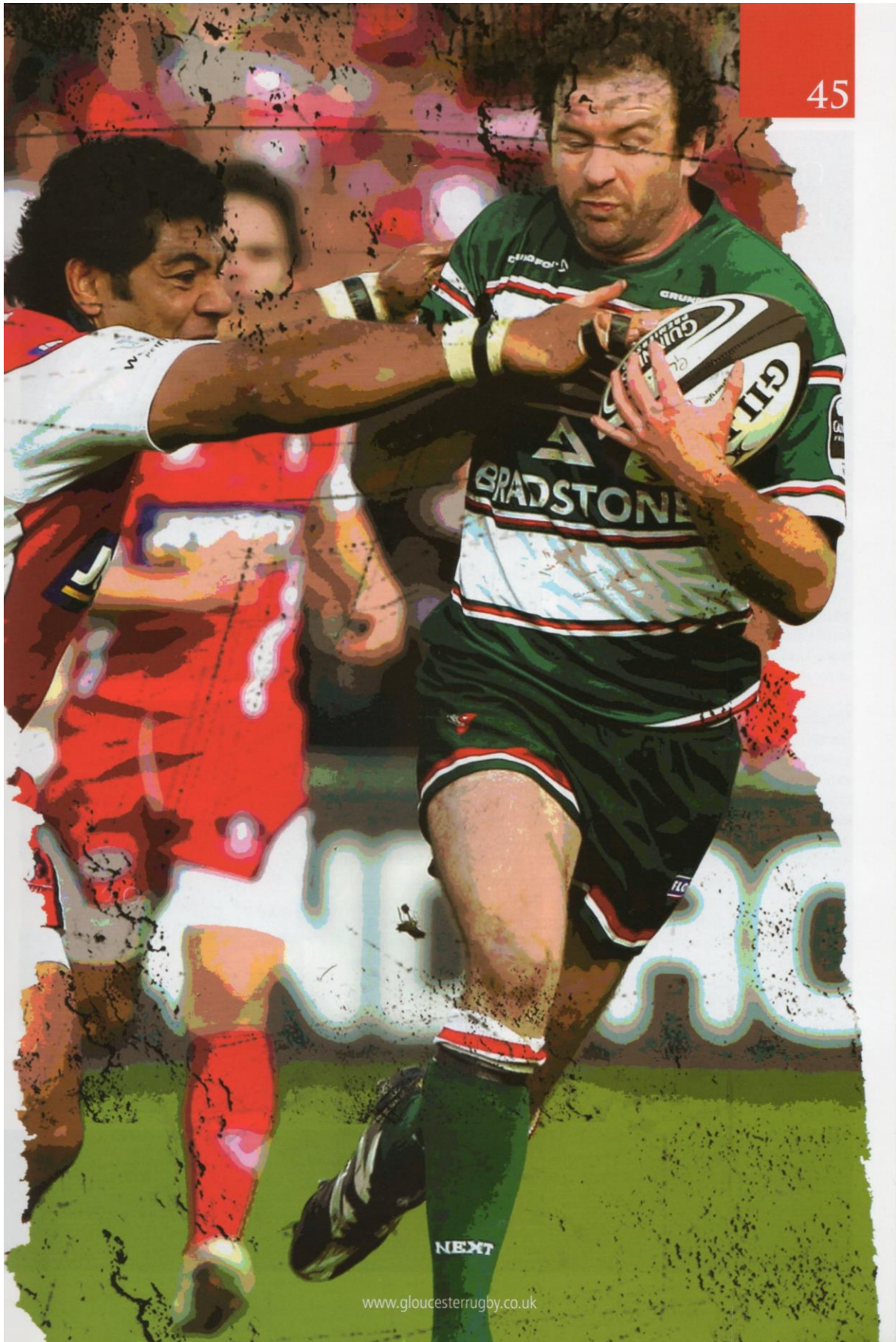
It is easy, this time, to agree with the Gloucester view. How can you win the crown over 22 weeks of the hardest league in the world, by far, and then lose it in one week? Gloucester have suffered cruelly in previous seasons, too.

There is another side to the debate, however, it is good and fitting to have the season end in a climax, before 70,000 people. Life, and sports marketing, is like that these days and no-one can deny that for the neutrals at least, there have been some great recent finals.

But there are those of us who have admired and secretly loved this grand old club for so long, who have seen it change from a homespun fervent entity where the stars cycled to the ground, to an institution where a group of galacticos who come in big cars, but still retain the fervency.

So at least we can agree on this. Let's hope that this season, Gloucester find the trick of topping the table as normal, and that this time they can sort out that little twiddly bit on the end and take the Guinness title itself at Twickenham. What a story for Downey and co to tell as he pops in from skittles.







GLOUCESTER RUGBY 30  
GLASGOW WARRIORS 8



## Weekend Warriors

Saturday, August 30 Attendance: 8,613  
Kingsholm, Referee: Tim Hayes



GLOUCESTER ended their pre-season campaign with a comprehensive – if not inspiring performance against Glasgow last Saturday.

Although they trailed 8-0 at one stage, Gloucester thoroughly dominated the second half without ever cutting loose under the new ELV's.

They controlled the scrummage situation, dominated possession and territory and were eventually rewarded with three tries. To give Glasgow their credit, they were extremely forceful around the contact area in the first half and turned over plenty of ball but despite their long-range try after 12 minutes, barely threatened.

Glasgow were already 3-0 ahead thanks to a Dan Parks penalty when they turned over possession and full-back Bernardo Stortoni kicked behind Gloucester's defence. Winger Lome Fa'atau sped in off his wing and beat Olly Morgan to the corner.

Gloucester responded with a 30th minute Ryan Lamb penalty after Mike

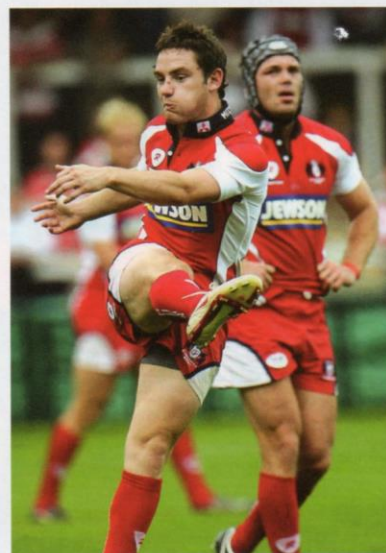
Tindall had been prevented from releasing the ball and it set-up a 30-point rally that saw Dean Ryan's side comfortably home.

Lamb added a second penalty at the start of the second half before Gloucester scored their first try. Gareth Cooper and Tindall took play close to the Glasgow line, Andy Hazell burrowed close and although Lamb's short pass was missed by Nick Wood, Anthony Allen ran through the cover to touch down.

It was all Gloucester now and although some of their play was disjointed and lacked cohesion, they were thoroughly on top. Lamb added another three points before two more tries sealed the game late on.

First, number eight Luke Narraway flicked a pass to Rory Lawson who scored down the short side and then replacement hooker Olivier Azam, Lesley Vainikolo, and Narraway all combined before the number eight sent Morgan to the sticks with a lovely pass.

Lamb landed both conversions as Gloucester eased home.







## Timeline

8 mins	
Parks PEN	0-3
12 mins	
Fa'atua TRY	0-8
30 mins	
Lamb PEN	3-8
42 mins	
Lamb PEN	6-8
47 mins	
Allen TRY, Lamb CON	13-8
54 mins	
Lamb PEN	16-8
79 mins	
Lawson TRY, Lamb CON	23-8
80 mins	
Morgan TRY, Lamb CON	30-8

## Gloucester Line-up

15	Olly Morgan	(1t)
14	Iain Balshaw	
13	Mike Tindall	(capt)
12	Anthony Allen	(1t)
11	Lesley Vainikolo	
10	Ryan Lamb	(3p, 3c)
9	Gareth Cooper	
1	Nick Wood	
2	Andy Titterrell	
3	Carlos Nieto	
4	Will James	
5	Alex Brown	
6	Peter Buxton	
7	Andy Hazell	
8	Luke Narraway	
REPS		
16	Olivier Azam	(Titterrell)
17	Dave Young	(Nieto)
18	Marco Bortolami	(Brown)
19	Alasdair Strokosch	(Buxton)
20	Rory Lawson	(1t) (Cooper)
21	Willie Walker	
22	James Simpson-Daniel	(Balshaw)
23	Matthew Watkins	(Tindall)
24	Apo Satala	(James)





## PETER ARNOLD

### SEASON PREVIEW

**New players, new laws, new season – Peter Arnold will just be glad when the rugby starts again.....**

#### WE HAVE BEEN HERE BEFORE

IT DOESN'T seem like over three months ago that we last welcomed Leicester to Kingsholm. There's something of a bitter taste lingering over that encounter; not because we lost, but because the manner of the defeat still rankles. We can accept being beaten by a better side on the day, but most of us feel that that simply wasn't the case on that day last May.

We could, and should, have won that day: indeed for long periods it felt as if the affair was done and dusted. And then, to quote 'Bohemian Rhapsody': we went and threw it all away.

Can't blame Leicester, of course, and they're as welcome as ever they were. Indeed, in a way I'm sorry they're here so early this season. The Glos. v. Tigers game is always one of the most eagerly anticipated Kingsholm occasions of the season, which a rich and varied history of epic encounters, won and lost, stretching back before even I can remember, but you can't look forward to something which is here already can you?

There is also the thought that it would be better to play this match when both teams have hit their straps and are up and running. However, that's not to be this time round, and it's always good to see Leicester, whenever they come.

#### 'OO THE 'ELL'S APO?

ONE thing about Dean Ryan. He never loses the ability to surprise us. When the name 'Apo Satala' cropped up among the replacements for last Saturday's

Glasgow match, it was received with a look of blank incomprehension by the vast majority of the Kingsholm faithful. However, it didn't take long for the anoraks among us to dig out some pertinent info.

The first thing which emerged was that Apo was one of the guys who created mayhem when our young and keen squad came up against the Army in the semi-finals of the Middlesex Sevens the other week. That's a fair recommendation in itself, bearing in mind the Army's formidable record in Sevens Rugby.

Then we learned that he had spent most of last season playing on the wing for Leeds, who had converted him from a promising pedigree as a flank forward. Unfortunately, he received his P45 when Leeds were relegated, so was ripe for the plucking. I'm told that Gloucester snaffled him from under the noses of the mighty Sedgeley Park outfit, so the Ryan and Redpath hit squad had struck again.

So we have a winger turned flanker, who on the evidence of the Glasgow game, looks set fair to revert to the ugly brigade once more. At least, he replaced the ironclad Peter Buxton in last Saturday's encounter, so it seems a fair bet that he is seen, at the moment, as a flank forward again.

That would seem sensible, in circumstances where we look to be deprived by injury of the inestimable service of Messrs Delve and Qera for quite a while yet.

It also occurs to me that our two premier wingers, Sinbad and Big Les, might just be in the international frame this season, and having lost Bailey and Lloyd, someone who can make his mark on the wing might just come in handy, in spite of the emergence of youngsters such as the immensely promising Charlie Sharples.

So good luck, Apo Satala. I've a feeling that we are about to get to know you considerably better.



Apo Satala last season





Chris White

### ELV-ER FISHING

ELV. Sounds like some form of gas-guzzling motor vehicle, doesn't it? Of course, it remains to be seen if the Experimental Law Variations are as damaging to the rugby environment as the internal combustion engine is in the wider world.

Personally, I don't quite know what to make of them, and I'm not alone in that. Martin Corry is reported to regard them with grave suspicion, while Chris White, regarded by many as the best referee in the world, appears to be very much in favour. However, Dean Ryan, than whom there is no shrewder rugby brain, concedes that it's going to take a fair few weeks before any of us really know where we're at, and if he's perplexed then there's no hope for the rest of us.

I suppose the ability to pull down the maul will provide the most contentious issue. Chris White points out that you



**It will be interesting to see how various sides exploit their new-found freedom, and what crafty ploys will arise from it.**



won't be able to do any such thing willy-nilly and that there is a legal and an illegal way to do it. That seems to me to be a recipe for all sorts of dispute, quite apart from the fact that the practise is dangerous anyway.

I don't suppose that today's welcome visitors will go too much on it, because, on the face of it, it will put a crimp in the rolling maul, of which Leicester are such famous exponents.

And then there is the matter of the line-out. At least, now, the refs won't have to count bodies to see that numbers are equal. It will be interesting to see how various sides exploit their new-found freedom, and what crafty ploys will arise from it. I bet Mike Burton would have thought of something.

What intrigues me is that the initiative for the ELV's comes from the Southern Hemisphere. A cynic would say that Australia and New Zealand started to lose a few matches, so they are seeking to change the Laws to their advantage.

I watched an Australian piece on the telly the other morning watching a women's 100m sprint where all the runners were in 5-inch high heels. The commentator speculated that the Aussies couldn't win any Olympic sprints so they changed the rules. Couldn't be like that in rugby of course. Could it?



## FAN ZONE WITH BOB FENTON

**ELV's, you are having a laugh, reckons Bob Fenton. But regular contributor from the Shed will be back in full war paint this afternoon for the visit of the Tigers.**

I'VE JUST been reading that rather excellent article by Stephen Jones in what is now last Sunday's Sunday Times, the one where he waxes lyrical about how much better Rugby Union is when left untouched by the daft ELVs and is not allowed to turn into the tap and rush rugby league variant that is now played in the Tri-Nations.

How right is he – if you haven't read it already I cannot urge you strongly enough to go and take a look at it on the Times website. Not least for his stinging slap across Rob Andrew's £400 grand chops for his less than helpful comments in a

newspaper article a few days previously. As he says, we have had a look at the several hundred changes, and taken the few best ones for ourselves. Having said that there is one law that I would happily wave goodbye to – isn't it time to do away with the 'Mark' when the ball is caught cleanly in the 22? Just a personal grumble (probably based on a life-long inability to catch a ball dropping from the heavens) but the game is not broken up here, why try to fix it?

Anyway, after what seems a lifetime we all re-assembled at Kingsholm for the pre-season friendly last week. Was it just me or did time seem to stand still through what, on paper anyway, was the summer. I mentioned this to a fellow shedhead the other day, he suggested that it was because we had missed out on our annual (and so far fruitless) trip to Twickenham for the play off final. He has a point, I suppose.

The summer break provided us with a

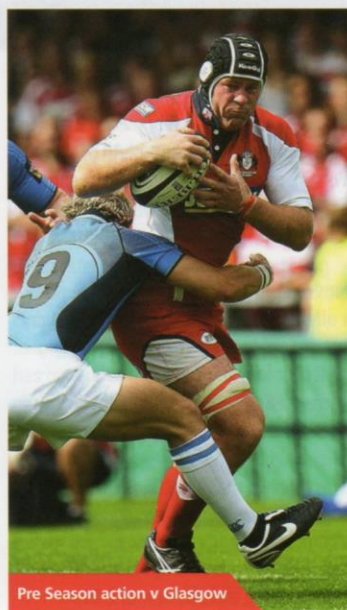
chance for endless speculation about comings and goings, not something I tend to get into – well not after getting my wallet severely lightened after paying out on a bet that Carlos Spencer would one day run out in a cherry and white shirt, anyway – but by my reckoning we have released just about everyone and signed just about everyone else. Not bad going really.

We do get to welcome back Adam Eustace. Personally I think Adam is a more than useful player who will always do a job for us. If the great Ian Jones can pick him, as he did a few years back, as a player who he thought could make it to the very top, then that is good enough for me.

I had the misfortune to follow Adam around a gym (not in a stalking sort of way, I hasten to add) a few weeks ago, I was kind of hoping that he didn't notice me knocking several tens of kilos off all the weights machines – talk about giving someone an inferiority complex...



Pre Season action v Glasgow

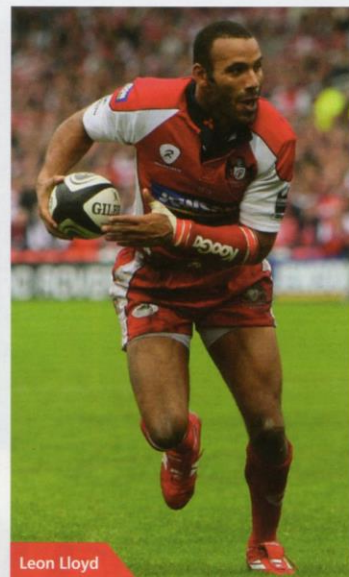


Pre Season action v Glasgow





Adam Eustace playing for Llanelli Scarlets last season



Leon Lloyd

But last weekend we were back, on about the only bright Saturday since May to watch an err... interesting encounter. I know you can't read too much into these pre-season run-abouts, but to say we were less than inspiring on the day may be a bit of an understatement. Yes we won in the end, and perhaps the plan was to lull any watching scouts from Leicester into a false sense of security.

That may well have worked but given the next few fixtures it propelled me into a total state of high anxiety. I can't go into the first game of the season with shredded nerves. I'll be in deep therapy by mid November at that rate. Talking of the first few fixtures, do you think whoever put them together was having a bit of a laugh – Leicester and Bath back to back, then Harlequins and Sale, you only had to throw Wasps into that mix and that would be about as tough as it can get. Still if you want to be the best you have to beat the best, so we may as well get them all out of the way early.



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Leicester are going to present a heck of a challenge today though. With a new coach desperate to get off to the best of starts where better could he do it than away at Kingsholm. They do have a fair few injury concerns at the time of writing, but I for one am not ruling out several Lazarus-esque returns to form

before kick off on Sunday afternoon.

One thing that both sets of supporters can do this afternoon though, is to pay tribute to Leon Lloyd, whose career came to an end over the summer – forced to quit through injury. I don't know how many games he played for the Tigers, but I'm guessing it was well into three figures, we only got to see him on a handful of occasions.

Because of his short career we never really saw the best of him, but five league tries in seven appearances shows that he was one of the best, and was probably worth more than his five England caps. Of course one of his best games for us was against Leicester, when he picked off a Andy Goode pass and ran in to score "Best pass I ever had from him," he said after the game. Hopefully he will be here today, there will be many old friends on and off the pitch who will want to wish him well for whatever his future holds.