



OFFICIAL MATCHDAY PROGRAMME OF GLOUCESTER RUGBY 2008/2009 ISSUE 02 • £3.00



Gloucester Rugby
v Harlequins

20.09.08 15.00



OLLY BARKLEY

EXCLUSIVE

DEAN RYAN

On Gloucester's Rec history makers

JAMES SIMPSON-DANIEL

Gloucester's winger opens up

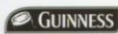
TODAY'S OPPONENTS

Meet leaders Harlequins

PLUS: Fans Zone, Peter Arnold, latest ticket news and much more

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CAPTAIN'S CORNER



LAST Saturday was pretty special for everyone – a first league victory against Bath at the Rec.

After the game it was clear to understand the sheer depth of feeling associated with the fixture. To know we were essentially making history after 20 years was a pretty humbling experience for us.

The reaction of supporters who have experienced plenty of disappointment down there in the past was something to behold and that made it even more special.

I thought we produced a really gutsy performance, a performance that was pretty smart and well executed. We had our backs to the wall in some respects but we were pragmatic in our approach and didn't take a backward step in terms of our physicality or effort.

To be the first captain to lead Gloucester to an away win at the Rec was great but it is vital we simply don't make too much of what is, after all, only one result.

Our win will mean nothing unless we can back it up this afternoon against the current table toppers. It is up to us to reproduce all the good things we did last Saturday but also take it forward and play even better.

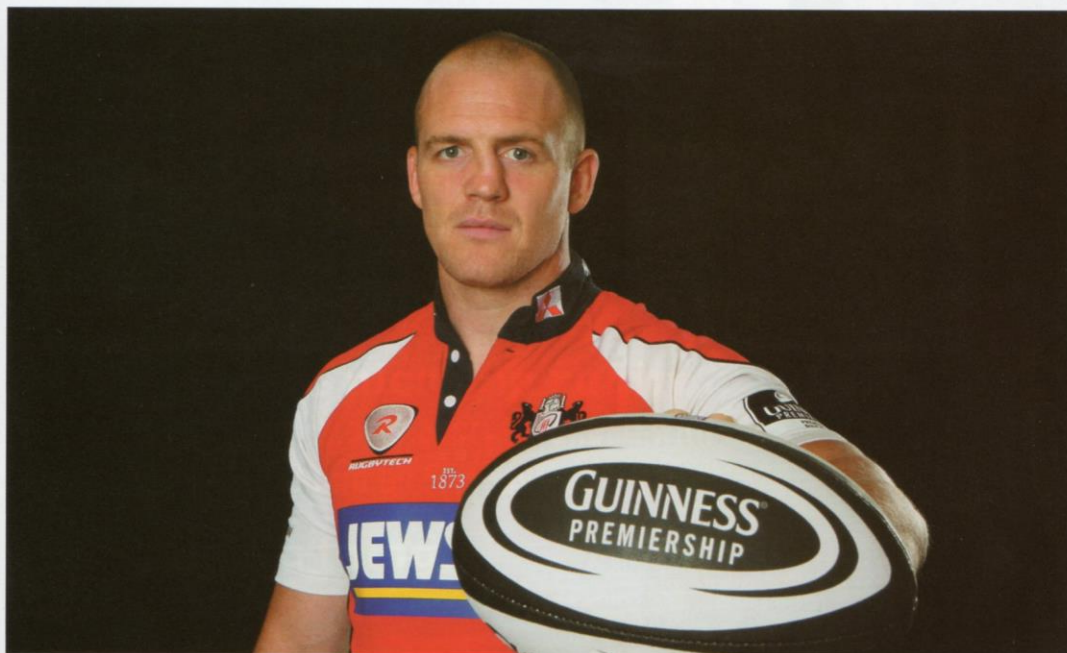
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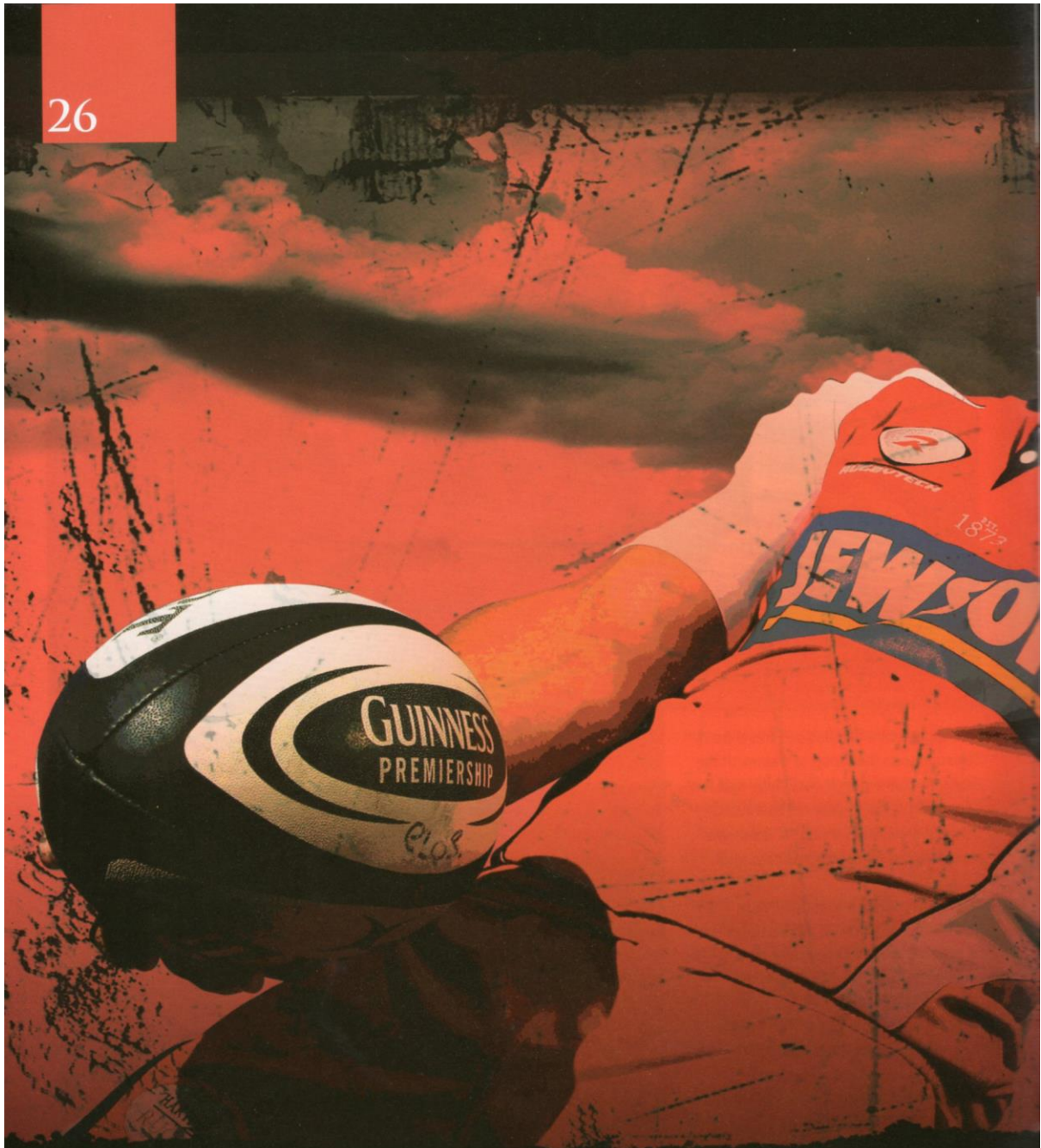
current table toppers. It is up to us to reproduce all the good things we did last Saturday but also take it forward and play even better.


Harlequins are a good side, full of quality players who are capable of breaking the game up by playing fast and loose. They are not top of the Guinness Premiership by accident and we have to be mindful of that fact and make Kingsholm an intimidating place to play at.

I think I am right in saying that we have lost our last two games here so we have to get back to establishing Kingsholm as a difficult place to get a result. We are pretty desperate to get back out there again and continue what we started last weekend.

The support at the Rec was incredible and if we could get 13,000 plus people making that sort of noise, it should be a pretty special afternoon.





 He has made the switch from Gloucester's greatest rivals and is champing at the bit to get onto the field. Olly Barkley opens up about his move to Kingsholm in the matchday programme.



BARINGS READY TO BITE

BARKS READY TO BITE



YOU COULD have been forgiven for feeling just a little bit sorry for Olly Barkley last week.

For an absorbing few days following Gloucester's harrowing defeat against Leicester, Barkley was centre of attention – despite the fact he had yet to pull on a Gloucester shirt with anything approaching anger.

Gloucester's weekend trip to Bath raised the possibility that the man who signed from the Rec in the summer would face his former team-mates in his first game of any sort for his new employers – a scenario that would have been uncomfortable at best – following the fall-out after the defeat against the Tigers.

Perhaps fortunately for Barkley, advice from the surgeon who performed summer surgery on his fractured left wrist ruled out the possibility, and everyone could breathe a little sigh of relief.

So the man who is arguably the most gifted and most miss-understood outside back in the country has been forced to wait for his debut at Gloucester. When it comes – and it could be this afternoon – he should have the Kingsholm faithful who regularly sardine themselves into their vantage points at Castle Grim in raptures.

His performances for Bath last season bore the stamp of a tremendously disciplined and consistent performer – a thinker, a game-breaker and thoroughly committed defender. If there were better players plying their trade up and down the Guinness Premiership last season in Barkley's position, they kept themselves very quiet indeed.

It will be his control, left-footed kicking game and on the hoof thinking capacity that will benefit Gloucester so much when he finally gets a chance to show what he can do.

So, why the change: "I didn't want to

progress my career and then wonder what might have been had I not given it a shot elsewhere," he said of his decision to quit Bath. "It's not about money because Bath did everything they could to keep me but it was about moving my game forward to a new level.

"It sounds a bit cheesy but I want to bring the best out of myself in a new environment. I am energised by what I see here and want to try and help make myself and the club better."



I have been through a lot at both club and international level but nothing invigorates me like the thought of being successful long-term at club level.



Barkley's multi-layered game may just provide the odd headache or two for head coach Dean Ryan, who has a wealth of options available to him at either stand-off or number 12 and it is inside centre that the 26-year-old covets.

"I just want to develop," he said. "I have been through a lot at both club and international level but nothing invigorates me like the thought of being successful long-term at club level.

"This is a new chapter in my career and with the new agreement in place between the clubs and the RFU, it is a little bit like starting from scratch. I appreciate I may have a bit to prove to people who don't know me but what I can guarantee is that they will get a hugely whole-hearted individual who will work bloody hard to be successful.

"I am in the process of developing partnerships and these partnerships need time to grow and mature. I don't think it

will happen overnight but I have got some great people around me and I am here because I truly believe I am in the right place to be successful.

"There was a lot going on towards the end of last season but I got my head down and got on with things. I hope the Gloucester supporters can appreciate that see that I am here to work hard and improve."

His wrist injury – damaged on yet another unfulfilled and wholly frustrating period with England in the summer – is coming along well and it won't be long until he is between the shafts in Gloucester's midfield.

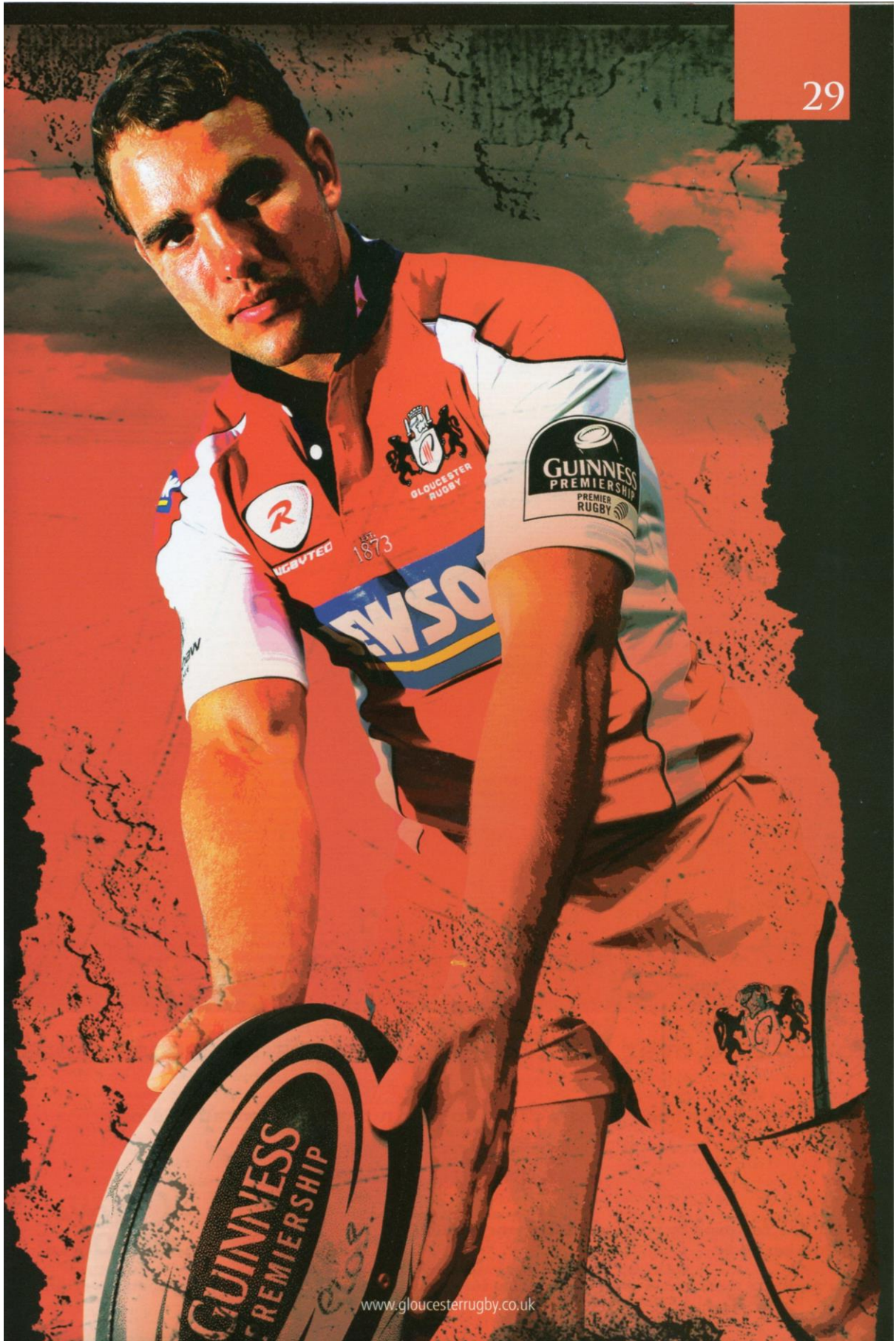
Anyone who witnessed first-hand Gloucester's seismic collision with Bath last season will appreciate just what a stellar talent now wears red. His play-making was top notch, his tackling brutal. Gloucester's victory at Bath last weekend got them on the board in the Premiership and they must now take that forward against Harlequins today - with or without Barkley.

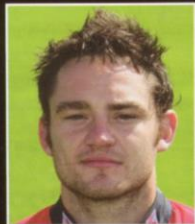
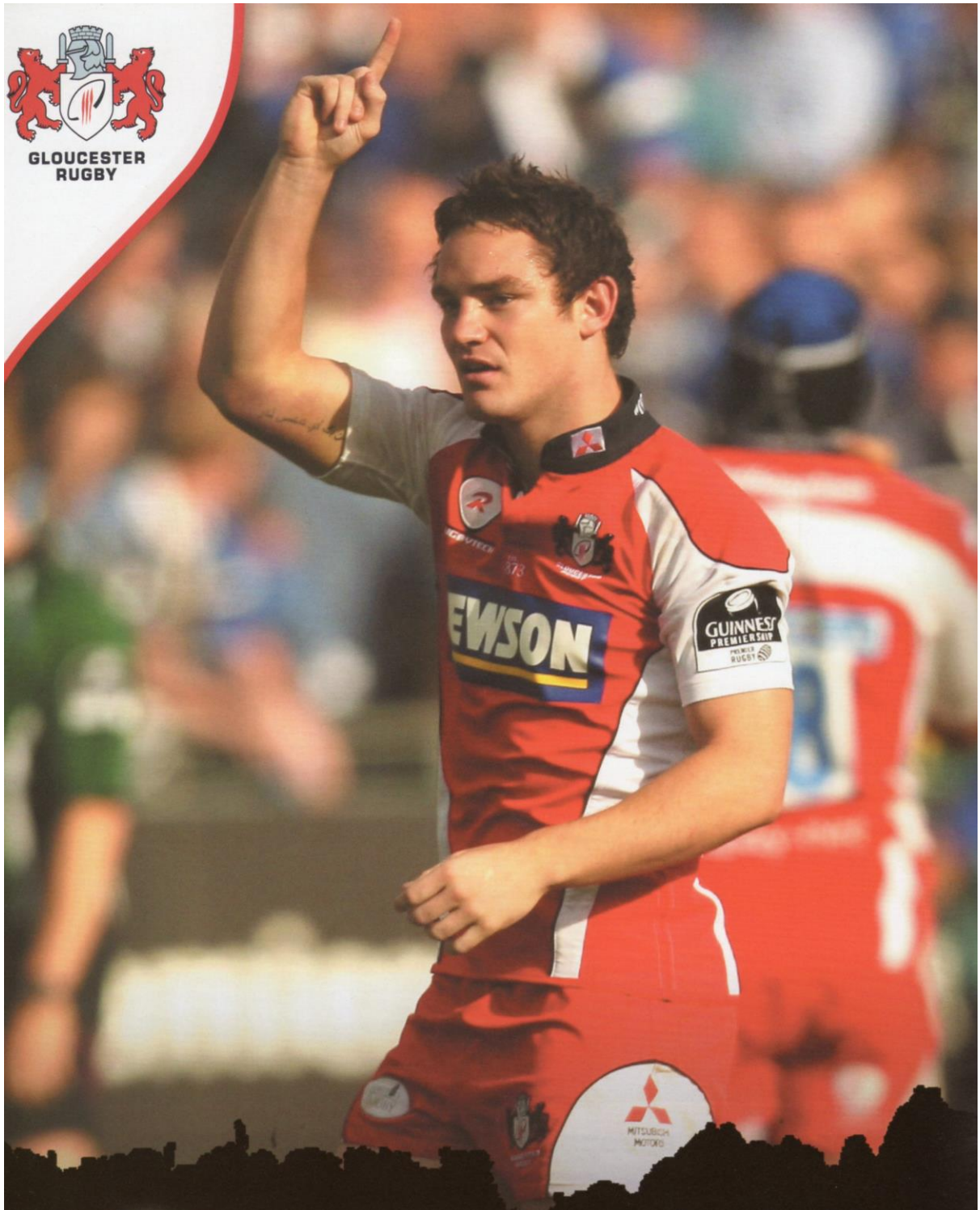
"I don't think anyone needs reminding about the Leicester game," he said. "We didn't play as well as we would have liked and the margins this season are very fine with the new laws.

"We analysed, dusted ourselves down and produced a really gutsy performance last weekend when perhaps nobody outside the club gave us much chance of winning at the Rec.

"The reaction said all that was needed last Saturday but we are not getting carried away. Today is another huge occasion and we have to kick on and get better and better."

It might be argued that Bath missed every hair on his head last weekend – it will soon be a head navigating Gloucester against some of the best in the business - and that is something everyone can be thankful for.





RYAN LAMB

DOB: 18.05.86

Weight: 13st 5lb

Height: 5'9"

Position: Stand-Off



RYAN'S REVIEW

No-one needs reminding that last week we made history at the Rec – how does that feel?

DR: IN many ways the result was more important than the performance. We have waited so long for it that the reaction of the supporters was pretty incredible and just emphasises what it means to them.

We had a pretty intense week in terms of our preparation because the defeat against Leicester left us nowhere to go in many ways. We appreciated we had to produce a response and we stayed really on script for 70 minutes and then we just lost our heads. Not everything right for us but we are trying to do the right thing and I thought we were a lot more pragmatic than we had been the previous week.



We want to become a great side and challenge for titles over a long period. To make that happen, the best sides are usually dragged across that line by players, not coaches which is why we have all been so honest in the last week or so.



When we looked at the game closely, there are things we must do better but in that there were a huge number of encouraging elements to our performance. Over-riding all that on Saturday was the

value and magnitude of the result for us – everyone involved can say they were part of something very special.



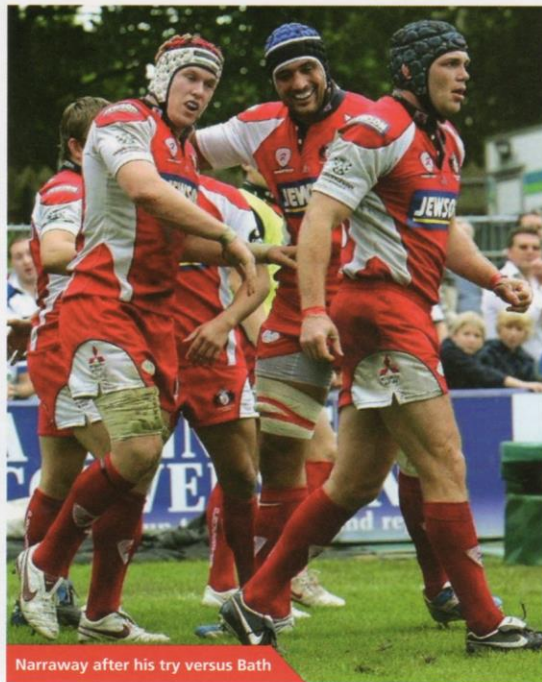
You were fairly out-spoken after the Leicester game, what did you mean?

DR: LEICESTER was the first game of the season, but we clearly hadn't learnt lessons we had experienced in the past – so I wasn't going to hang around for five or six games and see how it developed. Maybe, previously, I would probably have said to the group learn from things. But you get to a point where you have to draw a line in the sand. We drew that line last week and as a coach I had to make those decisions.

There comes a point in any individuals development that centres on support



Dean Ryan at The Rec



Narraway after his try versus Bath



Action versus Leicester

and development but there also comes a stage where individuals must take on the responsibility.

Therefore, we had to provide opportunities to see other people take it forward at the weekend. We want to become a great side and challenge for titles over a long period.

We were not there totally against Bath but it was certainly a step in the right direction and we must build on that now in the games we have coming up.



Harlequins are top of the table today, they are a very good side aren't they?

DR: We have recent experience of being burnt by them which in some ways goes back to the previous question. It

is important that we come out of today knowing we have learnt our lessons from past experience. But they are a very dangerous side and they are capable of breaking a game up to devastating affect because they have some outstanding broken field runners.

At Kingsholm last season I think I am right in saying they had secured a try bonus by half-time and not many teams stressed us as much as they did in attack. Dean Richards is doing an outstanding job and they are rightly at the top of the table with two wins.

We will respect their threat and potency but today is about us and ensuring we can put together another performance of craft, discipline and understanding like we did last weekend. If we do that then I am sure we can produce a threat against most sides.

“

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”

TODAY'S TEAMS

Saturday 20th September 15.00
Gloucester Rugby v Harlequins



REPLACEMENTS - G

- 16 TITENBELL
- 17 DICKINSON
- 18 BORTOLAMI
- 19 BUXTON
- 20 LAWSON
- 21 LAMB
- 22 FOSTER

REPLACEMENTS - H

- 16 BOTHA
- 17 LAMBERT
- 18 J EVANS
- 19 GUEST
- 20 GOMARSALL
- 21 T WILLIAMS
- 22 LUVENYALI

Guinness Premiership Table

Pos	Team	Pld	W	D	L	F	A	TF	TA	TB	LB	Pts
1	Harlequins	2	2	0	0	44	30	7	3	1	0	9
2	Leicester Tigers	2	2	0	0	44	30	5	4	0	0	8
3	Sale Sharks	2	2	0	0	32	24	1	0	0	0	8
4	London Irish	2	1	0	1	48	38	5	5	0	1	5
5	Bath Rugby	2	1	0	1	50	41	6	4	0	1	5
6	Newcastle Falcons	2	1	0	1	41	36	2	2	0	1	5
7	Northampton Saints	2	1	0	1	43	45	3	3	0	0	4
8	Worcester Warriors	2	1	0	1	24	31	2	3	0	0	4
9	Gloucester Rugby	2	1	0	1	29	37	3	5	0	0	4
10	Saracens	2	0	0	2	36	42	2	2	0	2	2
11	London Wasps	2	0	0	2	24	37	3	3	0	1	1
12	Bristol Rugby	2	0	0	2	33	64	3	8	0	0	0

Today's Officials

Referee: Rob Debney

Touch Judges: Don Helme & Martin Buck

4th: Mark Tovey

Replacement Ref: Wayne Barnes



PERSONAL FILES

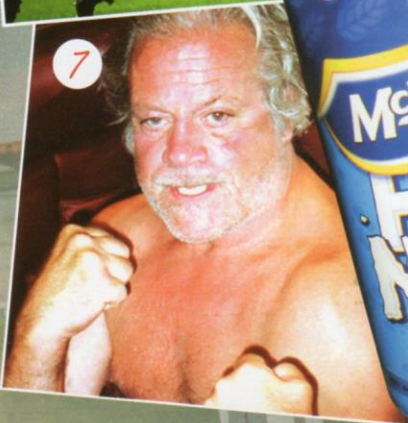
with **Olly Barkley**

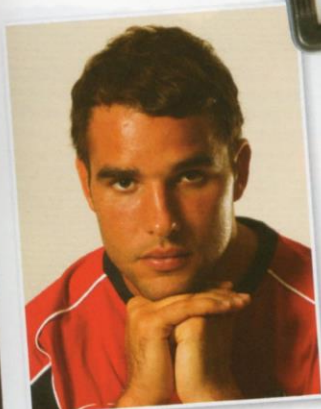


by Ian Randall

Olly Barkley

THE former Bath play-maker is one of Gloucester's four major summer signings. A hugely gifted play-maker, Barkley is able to play at either 10 or 12 and that versatility will be key to Gloucester this season. A thudding defender and willing to engage the defensive line, Barkley signed for Gloucester on a two-year contract. Since making his club debut in 2001, Barkley has established himself as the cornerstone of Bath's backline, amassing 1538 points in 164 appearances.





1. What is the first match you remember watching?

It was the England Australia World Cup Final back in 1991. I had no interest in rugby but I was made to watch it because my dad liked it and it was a friendly/family get together. I think I went out after about 20 minutes into it and played my football at the time.

2. Who is your sport's best pundit?

Bill McLaren

3. Can you explain cricket?

Yes. A collection of overs consisting of 6 balls, where each side has eleven players with which to gain as many runs as they can running between two stumps, hitting the ball as far as they can trying to gain boundaries.

4. Who has the flashiest motor at the club?

Les (Vainikolo) by a country mile. He's got an Escalade with fat rims on it.

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

An island because I like my own space. I'm pretty private. I like the beach, the water and open spaces.

6. What's your favourite biscuit?
Chocolate Hob Nobs.

7. Who is the most famous person with your christian name?

Oliver Reed and Oliver Twist.

8. Can you play a musical instrument?

I play guitar a little bit. I'm self taught, had a couple of lessons but I'm not too talented!

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

Maybe some hardcore rock group that gets to tour loads and go out all the time.

10. How would you improve the play offs?

I think I would include more teams in it. I think to finish top is a fantastic achievement and they should be crowned winners but then the play offs should maybe incorporate maybe 8 teams and have quarter finals instead of semi finals because then you would get more of a mix of teams in the melting pot.

11. What is your nickname at the club and how did it come about?
Barks has stuck..that's the main one.

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

Willie Walker. He's got good general knowledge and Mike Tindall has got good sporting knowledge.

13. Has your sport ever brought you to tears?

Nearly. When I left Bath last year, the last game at The Rec was quite an emotional time for me.

14. If there was one rule or law you could change what would it be? (sport related only)

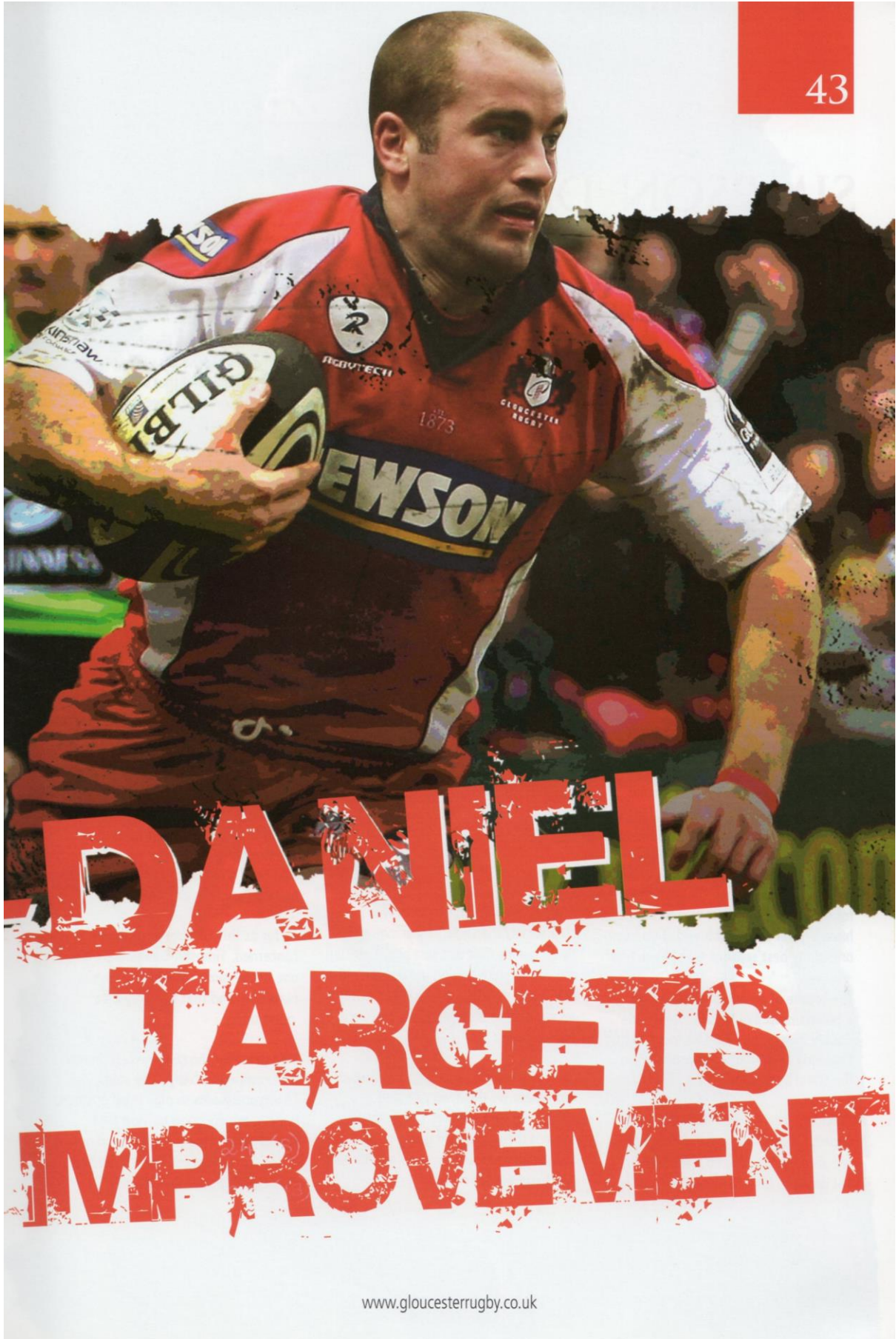
Maybe teams rewarded for running from their own 22. I think you should in some way, shape or form be rewarded but I'm not sure how you would work it. I think more often than not teams tend to kick the ball from their own 22 when it's often the best opportunity to attack numerically or otherwise.

15. Where in the world is the best night out?

Cardiff...it's the centre of the universe! Good student atmosphere, which always makes it good fun. I like the Welsh crack as well so good time for it.



 Gloucester got their season off the ground with victory over Bath last weekend and as James Simpson-Daniel tells Gareth Butler of the Citizen, there is always room for improvement.



DANIEL TARGETS IMPROVEMENT

SIMPSON-DANIEL TARGETS IMPROVEMENT



WITH his exceptional performances last season, wing James Simpson-Daniel set the bar pretty high on what he expects to produce on the field with Gloucester.

The Guinness Premiership Player of the Year finds himself in the England squad and hoping for that elusive run of games on the flank for his country.

But he feels he hasn't been at his best for the opening two games of the season and, although he isn't panicking, he is frustrated about the couple of uncharacteristic mistakes made against Bath last time out.

Asked if he was happy with his form, the response is an honest one: "Not amazingly so," he said. "I was happy getting a bit more ball in the second game against Bath but I was making a couple of little mistakes that are in my opinion out of character. I would have liked a bit more ball against Leicester as well so it's not been the perfect start for me. Saying that, last season I did not have a great start and it ended up being one of my best seasons that I have had.

The couple of mistakes last week for a perfectionist like Sinbad were made doubly frustrating when he found out England coach Martin Johnson was in the stand at the Rec.

"I had no idea he was there," Sinbad added. "It's just technical things I can see in my game. It annoys me but I'm not going to lose much sleep about it."

In his ninth year at Kingsholm, Simpson-Daniel was delighted to put to bed the Rec hoodoo which has plagued Gloucester since the league system began. But he knows the Cherry and Whites need to back that up with a win over Harlequins - no easy feat against the current Guinness Premiership table toppers.



To get the win against Bath was a good step for us, it was one of those games that was just about putting the whole myth behind us. Won one lost one is not quite the perfect start but it's a long season and they were two very tough games.



"To get the win against Bath was a good step for us," he said. "It was one of those games that was just about putting the whole myth behind us. Won one lost one is not quite the perfect start but it's a long season and they were two very tough games.

"We've looked at analysis and worked out where we think we can attack Harlequins and how we can defend against them. They are going to be tough. They are a great running side and will be physical as well.

"I also think we are capable of beating any side when we're playing our best rugby and that's what we need to do otherwise we can lose to any side as well."

In the supposedly better weather of the early season, Sinbad is aiming to get his hands on the ball as often as possible, and after relatively scant opportunity against Leicester, more chances against Bath, he is hoping the trend continues with the visit of Harlequins today.

"Sometimes you can go games without getting the ball," he said. "We've had two great games as far as conditions are concerned. I expect not to get any ball when it's winter but I got a little more last weekend.

"Also it is the way that you play against the opposition as well. You don't want ball that's not on. You want the forwards going forward, you want boys to be carrying the ball and if I can be part of that then great. But I always want more ball if possible in any match."

As far as this Gloucester squad is concerned, Simpson-Daniel feels it is one of the most competitive he has played in, and that can only be a good thing.

"It's great for the squad when there's that competitive edge," he said. "Everyone wants to play in all positions but it's equally good to have that flexibility to move players in and out of the squad keeping them fresh and challenging each other as well."



GLOUCESTER RUGBY
LEICESTER TIGERS

8
20



Flood gates

Sunday, September 7, Attendance: 13,159
Kingsholm, Referee: Dave Pearson



LEICESTER claimed their third successive victory at Kingsholm with a controlled and disciplined performance on the opening day of the season.

Gloucester were rusty and out of kilter and although they blew two great chances that may have won them the game, were well beaten by an extremely well organised and drilled side.

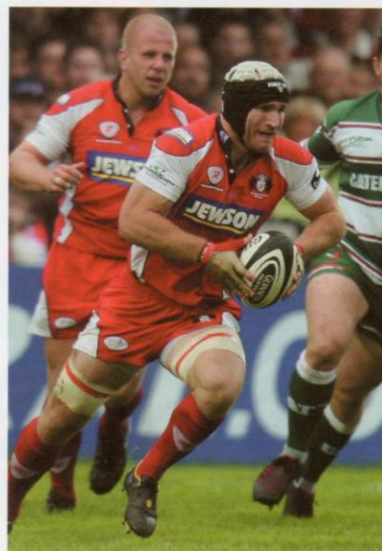
Both teams made plenty of mistakes and conceded plenty of penalties at the contact area but it was Leicester who went 6-0 ahead with two Toby Flood penalties. Ryan Lamb missed a couple of shots for Gloucester before the home side scored their one and only try.

Lamb's kick was brilliantly taken by Olly Morgan – comfortably Gloucester's best player – and although the full-back was stopped beneath the sticks by Tom Varndell, Gloucester attacked from the next scrum, Luke Narraway and Rory Lawson combined and James Simpson-Daniel stuck Morgan in at the corner.

The home side then nudged themselves ahead with a 43rd minute penalty but then their world started to cave in. They missed golden chances to score through Narraway and Carlos Nieto and Leicester

built on their reprieve by scoring twice before the end.

First, Jordan Crane carried hard from a line-out up the centre and when Dan Hipkiss came in to support, he off-loaded to Geordan Murphy, who reached the line. That established a lead Leicester would never relinquish and when Flood picked off Simpson-Daniel's pass in the final minute, the stand-off went behind the sticks to seal a priceless Tigers victory.



Man of the Match



Full-back Olly Morgan had an outstanding game – not only in defence and under the high ball but also in attack.

Coach's Comment



"That performance was not acceptable and we cannot tolerate it – we must improve and move on," head coach Dean Ryan.



Timeline

17 mins	
Flood PEN	0-3
20 mins	
Flood PEN	0-6
26 mins	
Morgan TRY	5-6
43 mins	
Lamb PEN	8-6
61 mins	
Murphy TRY, Flood CON	8-13
79 mins	
Flood TRY and CON	8-20

Gloucester Line-up

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



PETER ARNOLD

SEASON PREVIEW

➔ If Peter Arnold didn't wake up with a hangover last Sunday he never will. With victory at Bath still tasting every bit as sweet, he is back today for more chat from the terraces.

SCOTS WAE HAE

SEE we have another Caledonian in the fold. Scott Lawson, who has 16 Caps for Scotland has joined us from Sale, where he didn't seem to be getting much game time.

The last time I remember watching him was while sitting in the bar in a hotel on the Isle of Man, of all places. I was mildly impressed when he scored an Olly Azam-style try against Romania in the World Cup. Not the most fearsome opposition on the face of it, but those Balkan forwards are big and rough, and tries still have to be scored whoever is trying to stop you doing so.

We wish Scott well during his Kingsholm sojourn, but it's a shame that it has to be at the expense of young Ross McMillan, who is sidelined by a long-term injury. This could have been his breakthrough season because Andy Titterrell is in the frame for England duty, and we are going to need cover in the No. 2 position. It's a malign twist of fate that keeps him out of the action this year of all years.

It does occur to me to wonder about the growing Scottish influence at Gloucester, however. Perhaps someone should design a cherry-and-white tartan. Or introduce a raining regime which includes porridge and Glenfiddich as part of the diet.

Does anyone know what 'Gloucester Boys' sounds like on the bagpipes?

MAKES A CHANGE

WELL, here's a new experience for us. Today we're entertaining the side which, at the time of writing, sit on the top of the Premiership table, albeit courtesy of a single bonus point. For the last couple of seasons, we have led the pack for most of the time, and have spent our happy Kingsholm hours fending off the attacks of the pretenders snapping at our heels.

Early days yet, of course, but I've had a sneaking feeling for some time now, that Harlequins are becoming a force to be reckoned with, and they could well be this season's surprise package. As we all know, Dean Richards is nobody's fool, and he has shrewdly put together a very promising squad notable for its lack of big international names.

It would be a cliché to say that the Premiership is a marathon rather than a sprint, so I won't say it, but cast your mind back to last year and remember how many games Wasps lost in the first half of last season. Many people, myself

included, had written them off, but we all know how things turned out in the end. We can't exclude anyone yet awhile. And I do mean anyone. There are new looking squads wherever you look, and no one can say what effect the ELVs will have when things settle down – if they ever do.

JAMES O'BAILEY?

I SAID that James Bailey wouldn't take long to find a new club, and I've been proved right. I was pleased to see that he's been snapped up by London Irish.

I hope he gets a fair chance to show what he can do in his new environment. We all know that he can be a right handful when he turns it on, and isn't the world's worst full-back, as he, rather surprisingly, proved last season.

Just so long as he doesn't have a blinder against Gloucester, but I wouldn't put it past him.

BATH AT LAST

WINS at the Rec have been as scarce



Scott Lawson



Dean Richards



Olly Morgan

as dentures on a Buff Orpington for the last 18 years, so we can't be criticised for gloating a bit over the past week or so. It more than compensated for the display against Leicester, and it's to be hoped that we've got that particular bug out of the system. I'm not going to bang on about it because everything useful which can be said will have been said by the time you read this.

I did watch the highlights on the telly on Sunday. Have you caught up with the fact that ITV has picked up the mantle which BBC's Rugby Special used to wear so proudly before the Beeb surrendered rugby so abjectly?

Admittedly, the programme is only aired on ITV4, so you need a digital TV to watch it, but at least we have 90 minutes of Premiership rugby each Sunday, and it isn't on satellite. Personally, I have Freeview.

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As we all know, Dean Richards is nobody's fool, and he has shrewdly put together a very promising squad notable for its lack of big international names.

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 It's a very welcome development, but I have to say that I wasn't completely happy with the coverage of the Bath match. For example, Andy Hazell was playing a stormer, and it could be that Butch James's troubles were influenced, in part, by Hazey's attentions, but the only time he got a mention from the (Welsh) commentator was when he got penalised.

I'm not trying to take anything away from Bath's fightback in the last quarter of an hour, but surely, in the interests of fair reporting, the fact that Olly Morgan, after another wondrous display, went off injured, and that a raft of substitutions appeared to have disrupted the defence a little should have been remarked upon.

The only substitution which was mentioned was that of Lawson for Cooper. If you'd been a neutral, you wouldn't have known that Lamb, Strockosh and Titterrell were on the field unless you happened to notice them as they ran off after the game. As I recall, all the Bath substitutions got a mention.

As I say, the new involvement of ITV is very welcome, following their praiseworthy coverage of the World Cup. But if I had to comment on last Sunday's effort at the Rec, I would say "Tries hard. Could do better"



REC WRECKERS

With Andrew Pugh

Andy Pugh is one of Radio Gloucestershire's regular commentators and he was at the Rec last Saturday to watch Gloucester finally end their win drought.

I'VE NEVER enjoyed the drive down the A46 in recent years. You often make slow progress on the winding road, stuck behind a farmer's vehicle or a tourist enjoying the south Cotswolds. Forty-five minutes after leaving Gloucester, you arrive at the outskirts of that other city... and you can sit in a slow moving queue of traffic for another forty-five minutes... or if you are lucky, half an hour.

Finally, you arrive at what has to be said is a poorly appointed and outdated

ground, and watch our heroes often outplay their hosts but end up defeated.

Last Saturday, we changed our game plan, abandoned our usual approach, and journeyed to the Somerset city using the motorway. We felt it was going to be a different experience when we arrived at the Rec over two hours before kick-off, ridiculously early even taking into account the broadcaster's requirement to be on site an hour before the programme starts.

We interviewed some of the travelling Gloucester supporters, who were early arrivals at the ground. Unlike the usual optimistic succession of positives about the likelihood that "we would win this one", we had a mixed bag of comments...many fans pessimistic following the Leicester display, which was not the usually anticipated response.

We scaled the vertical ladder to the press box slung above the main grandstand. Our visits to this particularly aging facility have in recent years been plagued with technical problems, involving power surges and "outages", and faults with our ISDN lines. But once we had installed our gear, and plugged it up, everything worked perfectly...it all felt a little odd.

But once Wayne Barnes blew his whistle to get play underway, a sense of normality returned...or did it? Our boys were clearly up for it; the Gloucester kick-off was switched and caught Bath napping. Olly Morgan's excellent chase and tackle then led to the first scoring opportunity which Willie Walker secured with his drop goal. It was the perfect start, our commitment at the breakdown was fierce, and Bath were never able to get their front three driving forward in the way they were able to against Bristol the previous week. It was a



The Rec



Narraway holding off Maddock

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display of hugely pragmatic rugby football, which was not even rocked when we were reduced to 14 men. The extension of the lead with Luke Narraway's fine touchdown and Willie Walker's opportunism to complete a miserable day for his opposite

REC WRECKERS

With Andrew Pugh

number reinforced the feeling that our trip might just end rather differently to those of recent years. Like many, though, of the travelling faithful we were wary of another Bath fight back, and another case of defeat being grabbed from the jaws of victory. Not this time..... The earlier investment of effort had brought a big enough points buffer; those two late home tries rattling our nerves just a little.

Not only did the result end the long sequence of losses and draws at the Rec; it was also the perfect response to the disappointment of the previous Sunday at Kingsholm. A triumph of team work, and a well thought out game plan by



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our coaching team, which for all but the closing minutes denied Bath the chance to impose their preferred approach.

Next up, it's Quins, who have enjoyed a fine start to the season. We will need to show similar character and commitment to that displayed against Bath. But leaving the ground last Saturday and the quick journey back up the motorway was another strange experience. We had won at the Rec; we can move on; and it felt a much, much better place to be.

Andrew Pugh commentates for BBC Radio Gloucestershire, who cover all Gloucester's games home and away on 1413AM and online.



A frustrated looking Butch James

FAN ZONE WITH BOB FENTON

**As Gloucester
awoke from
its collective
hangover last Sunday, Bob
Fenton reckons he's found
the answer to the troubles
at the Rec - and it means
he might never go back.....**

WHEN I sat down to write this programme piece I thought about giving the club a ring to ask them if they could just print one word over the two pages. The word in question: 'YES!' Nothing more would be needed, everyone would know exactly what I meant.

Last weekend's win down at the Wreck kicked the blues from the Leicester defeat so far into touch that they don't even figure on the radar. A monumental performance from all the players to finally crack the last nut in the bag, the Bath jinx is now officially consigned to history.

Of course there is a downside. I have to accept that all the previous defeats were, in fact, my fault. For years I have been travelling to Bath only to see the inevitable defeat. Leads were thrown away on a fairly regular basis, we came close and we almost scraped home. Just never made it over the line.

Then this season... Twice I was offered tickets and twice I had to decline as family matters meant that I could not go. So it's clear - I was the bad omen. I was the reason that we hadn't managed to win a game down there since way back when. Now I daren't go back in the future just in case I screw the whole thing up again. Sometimes it's really hard being a supporter.

The turn-around achieved in two weeks was incredible though. Yes we were a little lucky that Butch James had one of those days when he couldn't hit a barn door with a cannon, but we looked the part.

Our forwards gave Bath no quarter and deprived them of any kind of a platform to work from.

In fact rather like our performance against Leicester. Some of the outpourings after the Leicester game were a bit harsh to say the least. Reading some of the comments you could have been forgiven for thinking that the season was as good as over already. The simple facts were that had a couple of players made slightly different decisions we could have put that game away. They know that, and they will have felt the defeat far harder than anyone else. And I reckon that a blasting from Dean Ryan is probably enough to focus anyone's mind.

Alex Fergusson may be renowned for his 'hairdryer' but if Deano were ever to conduct himself Fergie-style in the changing rooms in the way he did as a player, it would be akin to standing in front of a flame thrower!

Of course it's disappointing when we lose, particularly when it's the first game of the



Action v Bath



Action v Bath



David Strettle

season, but to quote the bloke who makes exceedingly fine cakes: 'If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster; and treat those two impostors just the same... etc etc.' There's a lesson in there somewhere. Looking ahead to today's game, it used to be that the visit of Harlequins was regarded as a home banker, the only question was whether it would be a four or five point victory. Not anymore. Dean Richards has moulded them into a formidable outfit more than capable of standing up to anyone in the Premiership.

Last season they ran us very close, if I recall correctly they had a bonus point for four tries in the bag well before half time. They're off to a good start this term with two wins out of two, but the loss of Nick Evans may hurt them – he's a quality player. In David Strettle (no cheap Duracel jokes here, you'll note) they have an out and out match winner. He ripped us apart at times last season, so we'll need to keep a careful eye on him. But, as ever, I am confident, after last weekend I reckon a hard fought win is



Yes we were a little lucky that Butch James had one of those days when he couldn't hit a barn door with a cannon, but we looked the part. Our forwards gave Bath no quarter and deprived them of any kind of a platform to work from. In fact rather like our performance against Leicester.



on the cards but no room for complacency!

So as things look a bit brighter on the pitch, we were treated to some good news that, planning permission and all the other factors allowing, we could soon be standing in a nice new shed. More room to breathe and

– heaping delight upon delight – bars at the back so no more having to fight your way in and out to the back of the High Tech stand for a half time pint.

Who knows perhaps we'll even get new toilet facilities to replace the ones that have been there since the Romans were tearing up the Premiership as Glevum several centuries ago.

Having hospitality boxes over our heads could be a bit of a double edged sword though. We heard at the last home game how some of the reckless people in these corporate boxes were – heaven forefend – taking glasses out onto the balconies. Well I can tell you I will not be pleased if someone drops a glass on my head, or empties the contents of his glass down the back of my neck.

On the plus side, we could all stand there in best 'Oliver' tradition and beg for a few scraps from the table.

It'll make a change from pasty and chips!

BATH RUGBY 17
GLOUCESTER RUGBY 21



History Made

Saturday, September 13 Attendance: 10,600
The Rec, Referee: Wayne Barnes



GLOUCESTER claimed their first ever league victory on the soil of their greatest rivals - banishing 18 years of hurt with a tremendously disciplined performance last Saturday.

They were everything they had not been against Leicester. Their forward pack operated close to maximum temperature at close quarters but were also pragmatic at the set-piece. Gloucester's defensive effort also bordered on the outstanding and when they prevented the likes of Lee Mears and Matt Stevens using their off-load game, Bath ran out of ideas before their late rally.

Gloucester were tremendously served by Andy Hazell, Olivier Azam and Willie Walker - the stand-off who kept Gloucester turning over thanks to his intelligent kicking game and use of possession.

He nudged Gloucester into a first minute lead with a penalty and although continued to damage Bath with their forward effort, the home side scrambled ahead when Michael Lipman collected a line-out tapped down to burst through the middle of Gloucester's cover and to the whitewash.

However, Gloucester didn't panic. They sat in the contest and with the likes of Luke Narraway, Matthew Watkins and

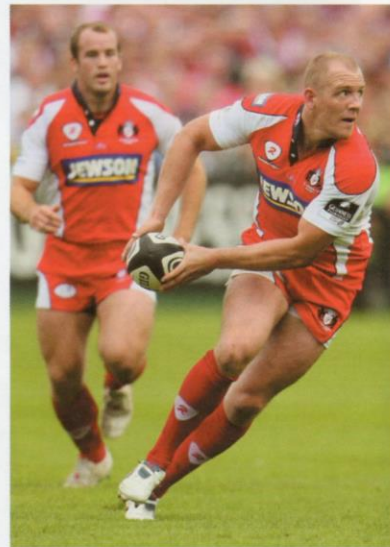
Mike Tindall all heavily involved, churned themselves forward to allow Walker two more shots at goal and it shook Bath to the core. In the meantime, Gloucester simply went about their business and took a giant step towards victory with a 62nd minute try.

Gloucester were also helped by the fact Butch James had a nightmare with the boot. In total, he would miss five shots at goal and it shook Bath to the core. In the meantime, Gloucester simply went about their business and took a giant step towards victory with a 62nd minute try.

They swung a scrum to the blindside, Narraway picked up, dummied to pass and sped inside Stuart Hooper and all the way to the line. Gloucester were humming now and when Walker charged down James' cross-field kick, he scooped up the loose ball and dived in for try number two.

He converted his own score to leave Gloucester 21-5 ahead with 13 minutes remaining. But this contest was not finished. Bath raised themselves for a barnstorming finish when Joe Maddock scored brilliantly down the right with nine minutes to go and then Nick Abendanon raised the prospects of another great Bath escape when he took Shaun Berne's pass to score.

Although it cut the gap to four points it was not enough and Gloucester's celebrations told the story.



Man of the Match



There were any number of takers but Olivier Azam's calmness under pressure and power at the contact area were crucial

Coach's Comment



"This is just time to savour the victory. So many people have tried and failed. There are things to work on but it is a great feeling," head coach Dean Ryan.



Timeline

1 min	
Walker DROP GOAL	0-3
11 mins	
Lipman TRY	5-3
24 mins	
Walker PEN	5-6
38 mins	
Walker PEN	5-8
62 mins	
Narraway TRY	5-14
64 mins	
Walker TRY AND CON	5-21
71 mins	
Maddock TRY, Berne CON	12-21
77 mins	
Abendanon TRY	17-21

Gloucester Line-up

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