

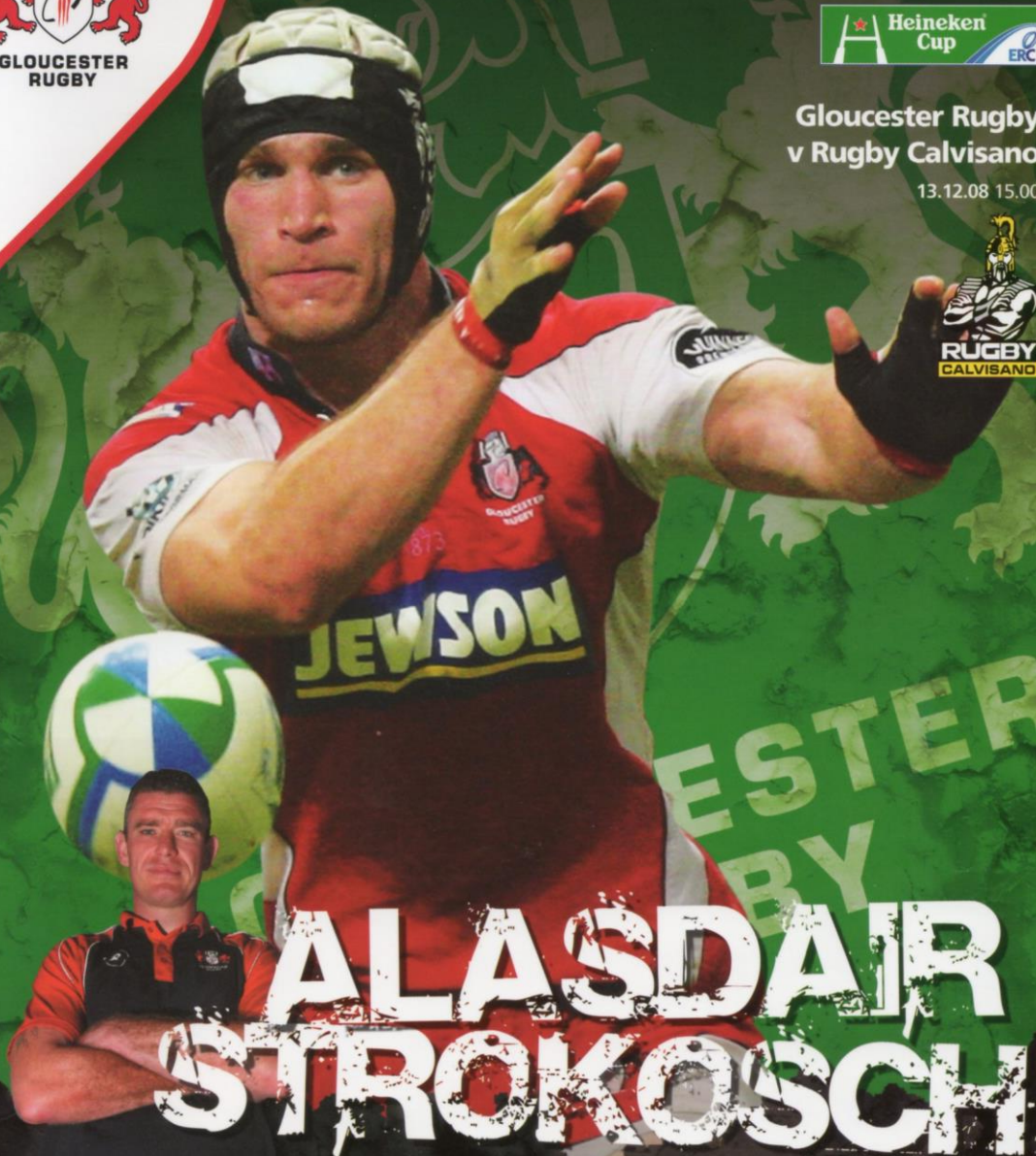


OFFICIAL MATCHDAY PROGRAMME OF GLOUCESTER RUGBY 2008/2009 ISSUE 09 • £3.00



Gloucester Rugby  
v Rugby Calvisano

13.12.08 15.00



# ALASDAIR STROKOSCH

## DEAN RYAN

looks back at Calvisano victory

## CALVISANO

An insight into today's opponents

## GREG SOMERVILLE

All Black prop has landed

**PLUS:** match action, fans zone, Peter Arnold, ticket offers and much more.

Heineken Cup Round Four



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## CAPTAIN'S CORNER



ON THE afternoon Harlequins were setting pulses racing in front of 76,000 people at the Stade de France against Stade Francais, we got our very own Heineken Cup job done against Calvisano.

The surroundings may have been a bit different but the end result was vital – a bonus point victory that keeps our Heineken Cup qualification hopes very much alive after three rounds of the competition.

Job done was really all you could say about our performance. When we came to analyse it I don't think there was a single aspect we carried out like we would have liked – yes we scored six tries, yes we did what we had to do but we did not lay down the sort of marker we intended to at this stage of the competition.

When you combine that with an



**The surroundings may have been a bit different but the end result was vital – a bonus point victory that keeps our Heineken Cup qualification hopes very much alive after three rounds of the competition.**



exceptionally narrow pitch which made it hard to get numbers on anyone and the fact they kicked a lot of ball in the first 30 minutes to minimise their error count, it is easy to understand how we didn't get into the game as we would have liked.

But that is behind us now. Our task today is to maximise our performance levels

and attain the sort of attention to detail we accomplished against Saracens, Bristol and Northampton. If we can do that then I am sure we can put more pressure on Cardiff and Biarritz in this pool.


However, it would be wrong not to give Calvisano credit for the way they stuck at their task last weekend. They scored two tries, were very physical and abrasive and I am sure they will come with the same approach this afternoon and that is something we must be ready for.

This is our last game at Kingsholm before Christmas and in 2008 so on behalf of the playing department, may I wish all our supporters a very happy Christmas and New Year. Please get right behind the boys again today – those supporters who made the trip to Italy last weekend really made the atmosphere special – and cheer us to another vital Heineken Cup victory.

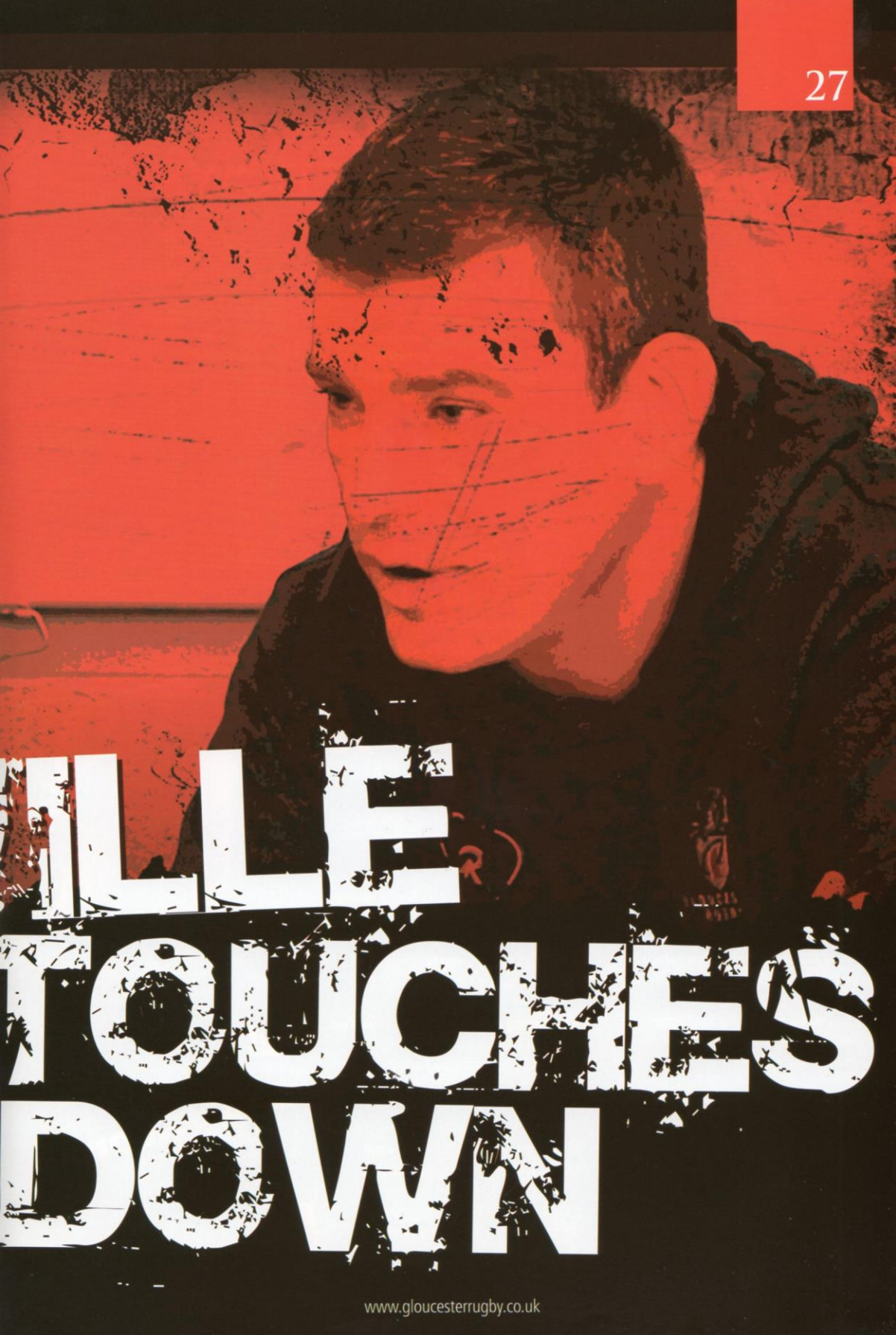




# SOMERSET

 He is the most capped All Black prop in history and is now at Kingsholm. The Citizen's Gareth Butler evaluates his arrival and what he will bring to Dean Ryan's squad.





# WILLE TOUCHIES DOWN



## SOMERVILLE TOUCHES DOWN



HE has been a long time coming, but Greg Somerville has finally touched down in

Gloucester and pulled on the cherry and white shirt – even if it was only for a photo call.

The most-capped All Black prop is Gloucester's for the next two-and-a-half years at least as he leaves behind a long career in New Zealand to start afresh.

Winning runs in Somerville's blood. He joins as current Tri Nations and Air New Zealand Cup holder with the All Blacks and Canterbury respectively. He has 67 caps for his country and the only accolade he lacks, like most modern New Zealanders, is the William Webb Ellis Trophy.

Tight-head props rarely have a dramatic impact on a side (ask Carl Hayman up in Newcastle), but Dean Ryan rightly argues Gloucester do not need players to sweep in and change the way the side plays.

Fans do not need reminding that the Cherry and Whites have sat top-of-the-table for two years but have nothing to show for it.

What Somerville is here to provide is that edge, that missing ingredient which is the subject of many a debate in the bars around Kingsholm. The ability to push the side through in the final stages of a Heineken Cup knockout or a Guinness Premiership play-off.

But first he must win the shirt. With Carlos Nieto in fine form in the number three jersey at the moment, Somerville's versatility may come into play as he can fit in on both sides of the scrum.

The current loose-heads – Nick Wood and Alasdair Dickinson – will have something

to say about it, but is there a front row combination more gruesome than Somerville, Azam, Nieto?

Of course with the frequency of injuries that the intensity of the current game of rugby union provides, all four props, plus Jack Forster and David Young in reserve, will have a part to play. One thing is for certain, the front row options are looking healthy.



**It's good to get the family settled and try and move your way into the team and hopefully in weeks to come I'll get to give it a crack out on the field.**



Fans will be happy to hear Somerville's talk of finding a fresh challenge stimulating. He is not here to reflect on a long and successful career, but to begin a new chapter with the Cherry and Whites.

"It's been eight months now since I signed, so finally being here is a bit of a relief," he said.

"Everything at home is done and washed away now and I can move on with what I've been planning for the last few months.

"I've had four weeks off now and it's always been in the back of my mind that I would be playing more rugby.

"Coming into a new group is quite stimulating, so I'm looking forward to the challenge."

Somerville is available from this weekend and may get his first start against London Irish away. He will get another Kingsholm experience, in the next home game against Saracens, when Cobus Visage will be rolling into town for a tasty locking of horns.

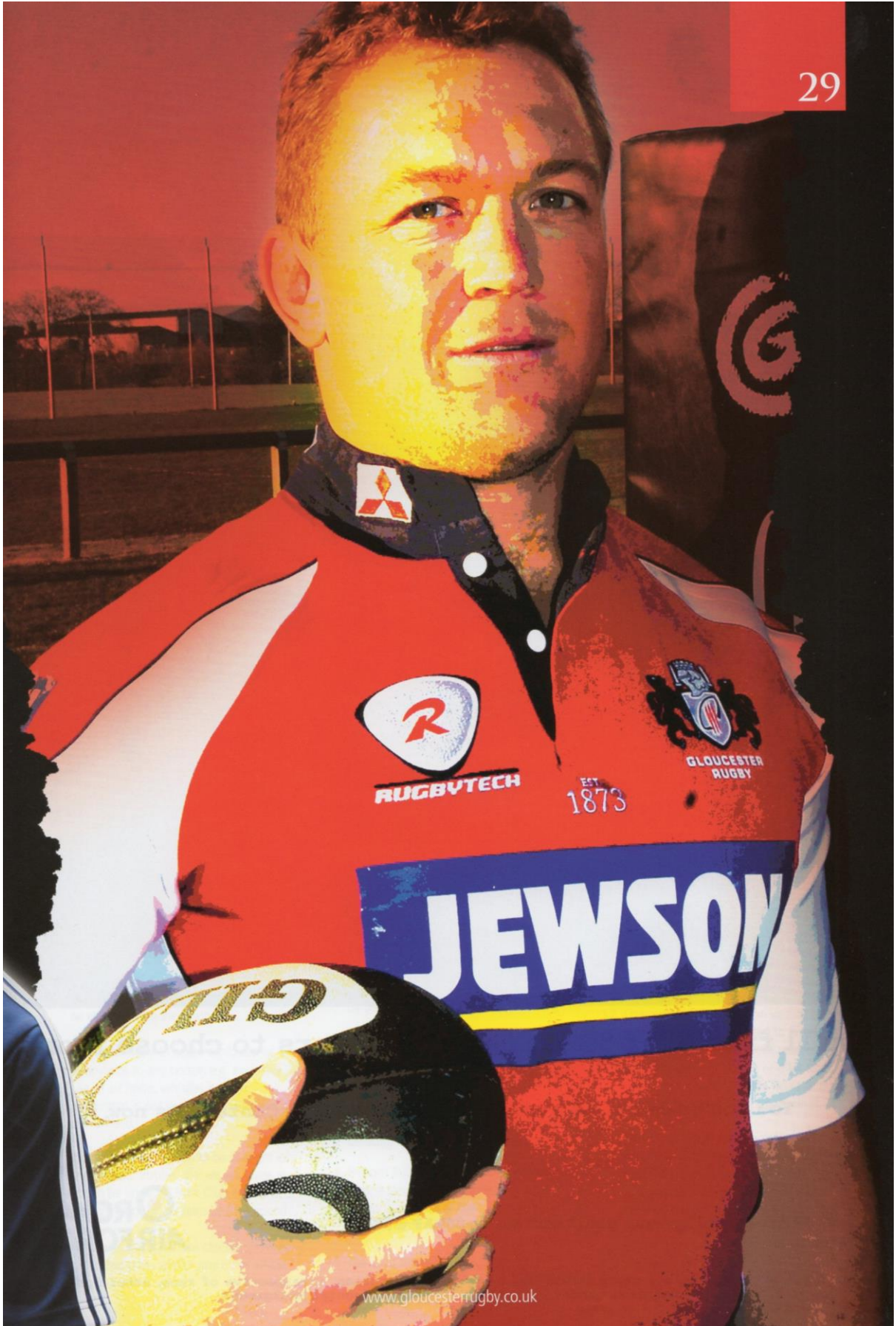
But for now, Somerville is happy to get settled in.

"It has taken a bit of pressure off, that's for sure," he said.

"It's good to get the family settled and try and move your way into the team and hopefully in weeks to come I'll get to give it a crack out on the field."











## RYAN'S REVIEW



*That is six wins in a row now and nine in 10 – you must be delighted with the current form?*

**DR:** WE have played well in our last three Premiership games, certainly. Our last defeat was in the middle of October so that in itself breeds confidence within the squad and what we can achieve. We are obviously more comfortable playing a game that is based around movement – I don't think that comes as a shock to anyone – and form and confidence has come off the back of that.

The Saracens result was very important for us because it really backed up the month of November. To claim 14 points from a possible 15 was a fantastic return for us and has given us a really good platform to build on when the Premiership returns.

We have picked off wins in all three competitions, we are in a semi-final and are fighting it out in Europe. I think we can be pretty pleased with where we are currently – but we obviously want to improve as much as we can.



*Was the result last weekend everything you expected?*

**DR:** The most important thing was that we got the job done because we knew we needed five points. It's incredibly difficult to go to a place like that in the knowledge that you need five points and then try and structure a game around that requirement.

It was really difficult circumstances, muddy under foot and on a pitch probably half the width of Kingsholm. We understood it would test our patience and meant we would sit in areas of our game longer than we would have done in normal circumstances. Some of our basics in the first half were poor but we'll move on from this with five points safe and secure with



Lesley Vainikolo of Gloucester crosses the line to score a try during their game against Northampton Saints





Luke Narraway of Gloucester off loads the ball during their game against Northampton Saints

the knowledge we can play a lot better.

Not everything that has been obvious in recent performances was massively applicable last weekend so it wasn't a true illustration of what we can achieve and at certain times that exposes errors in our game.

Those errors did not occur because we didn't try hard enough – I thought the application against a very physical side was spot on – we just could have executed certain phases a little better.



**What do you expect from Calvisano today?**

**DR:** PRETTY much what we experienced last weekend. We know they will be

physical and motivated to put on a good performance. They kick a lot in the first 30 or so minutes to try and minimise their mistakes and their line-out routine was good last week – probably the best aspect of their performance.

They do have some good players, that should not be forgotten and nothing should be taken for granted at this stage of the competition.

We are still one slip-up away from elimination so our task is to take the running of the pool into the last two games and see where that goes. We want to put together a performance of better overall quality last week and if we can do that then we should keep our run going.



Not everything that has been obvious in recent performances was massively applicable last weekend so it wasn't a true illustration of what we can achieve and at certain times that exposes errors in our game.





# TODAY'S TEAMS

Saturday 13th December 15.00  
Gloucester Rugby v Rugby Calvisano



The main formation diagram shows Gloucester players on the left and Rugby Calvisano players on the right. Gloucester players include: 11 VANNIKOLO, 12 TINDALL, 13 WATKINS, 14 FOSTER, 15 MORGAN, 16 TAYLOR, 17 COOPER, 18 COOPER, 19 COOPER, 20 COOPER, 21 COOPER, 22 COOPER. Rugby Calvisano players include: 11 INTOLIA, 12 FORCICCO, 13 MAIR, 14 STANOJEVIC, 15 MCLAN, 16 TALE, 17 BAGO, 18 BAGO, 19 BAGO, 20 BAGO, 21 BAGO, 22 BAGO. The diagram also features the Gloucester castle crest and the Rugby Calvisano bear mascot.

TODAY'S OFFICIALS  
Referee: Tim Hayes Touch Judges: David Bodily & Alan Jenkins 4-B 5 4th Official: Bob Mullis 5th Official: Mark Tovey

Gloucester Replacements

16 S. LAWSON, 17 YOUNG, 18 SOMERVILLE, 19 JAMES, 20 H. LAWSON, 21 WALKER, 22 BARKLEY

Calvisano Replacements

16 MCKENZIE, 17 D'APICE, 18 CATINA, 19 PERSICO, 20 GRIFFIN, 21 FRASER, 22 PIRACIOTTI

Heineken Cup

ERTEL ZAITZ ZOL



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# PERSONAL FILES

with Greg Somerville



by Ian Randall

*Greg Somerville*

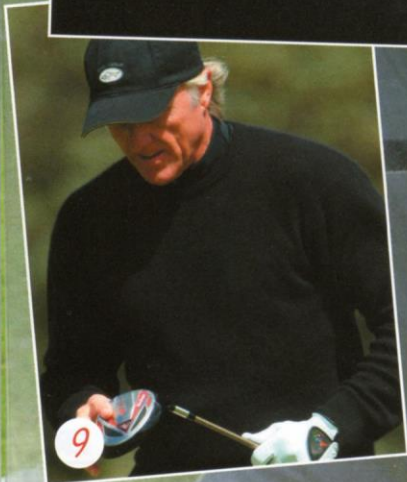
He is the most capped prop in the all black history and now finds himself at kingsholm as the newest addition to dean Ryan's squad and Ian Randall get's to know him



19



11



9



6





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

It was a game between two local sides, no-one will know them. There was a big fight it went into the stand and the whole stand joined in as well - it gets a bit like that at home!

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

I couldn't tell you, can't think of anyone off the top of my head.

*3. Can you explain Cricket?*

Cricket, who can? Sit there all day - I can't I fall asleep watching it.

*4. What's been your worst fashion crime?*

Probably moleskins on my skinny legs, they were these tapered pants, I don't know if you get them like that over here but they were just no good. They were green as well, but they were the in thing in the rural scene but they didn't work and I didn't wear them much.

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

I've got to work that out - it's definitely not me at the moment.

*6. If money was no object what would be the 1st thing you would buy?*

A boat, I just like fishing.

*7. Which charity do you support and why?*

Anything that is do do with children, I don't support any single one myself I just try to spread it around really.

*8. What's your favourite biscuit?*

Toffee Pops, they're like the chocolate biscuits with caramel in the middle.

*9. Who's the most famous person with your christian name?*

Greg Norman the golfer.

*10. Can you play a musical instrument?*

No, badly! I tried the guitar but I've got no memory for songs and it helps if you can remember songs but I just thought it sounded pretty cool when guys can play the guitar so I gave it a crack but I gave it up. Hopefully one of my daughters will pick it up one day.

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

U2 - I just think their music's good.

*12. How would you improve the play offs?*

I guess it's the same that I've been involved in - you make the top four and then it's anyone's shot from there so I think the whole focus is to make the top four and then make the most of the situation you're in then.

*13. What is your nickname at the club and how did it come about?*

I pretty much get called Yoda by everyone back in New Zealand, I got called it one day in the New Zealand under 21s and it stuck from there, I didn't react too well to it and

obviously when you do that with nick names they stick. The boys have got to catch on to it here yet though.

*14. What's your party trick?*

I'm not really much of a prankster or anything so I don't really have one, I just try and stay in a good state I guess. I'm quite a boring guy aren't I?

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

I don't really know anyone properly yet so I might as well just draw two out of the box in a lucky dip!

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

Yeah, almost, pretty much, I've seen a couple of awkward situations.

*17. If there was 1 rule or law you could change, what would it be?*

I can't complain, I'm pretty much enjoying it.

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

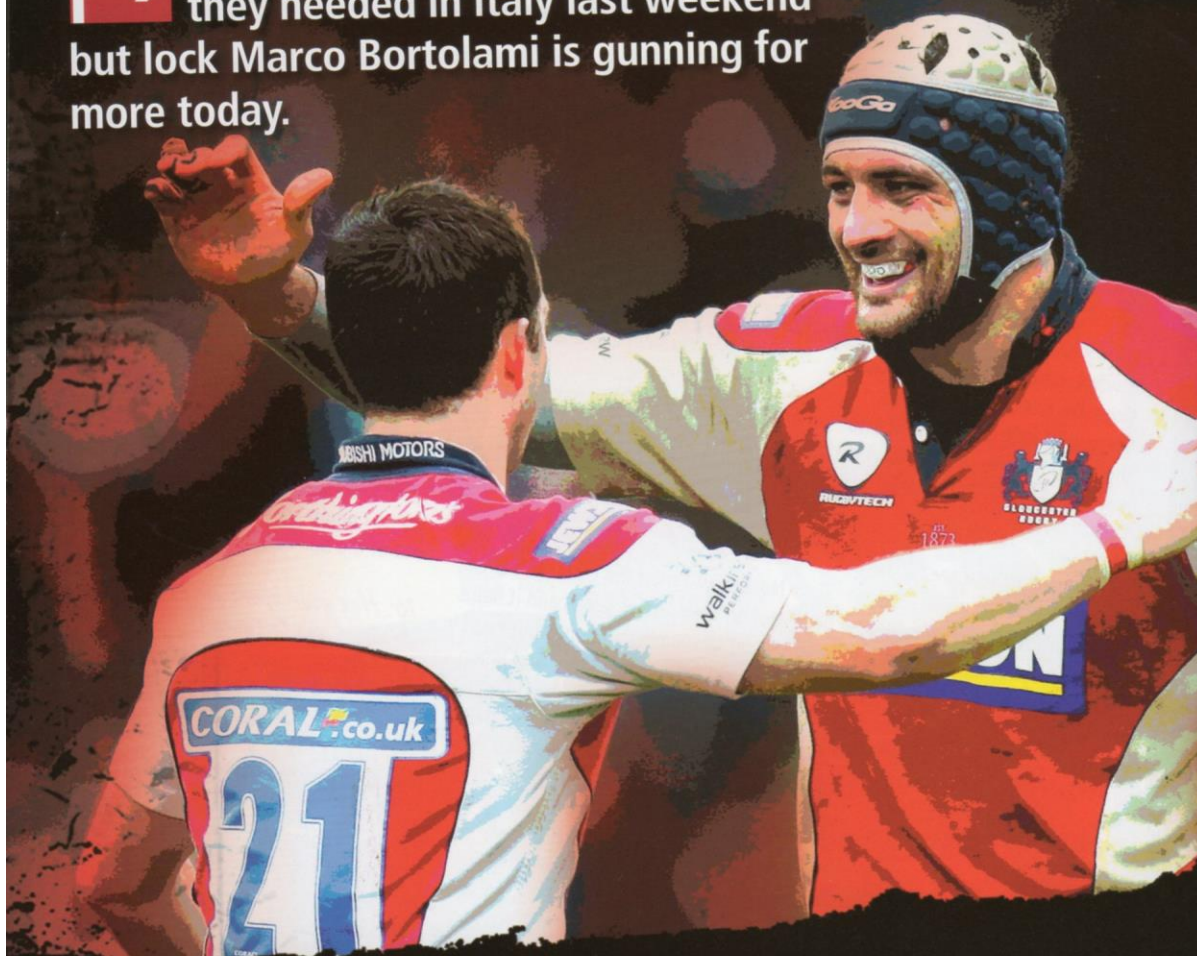
I think that maybe there's some people who try and become the people that they think other people want them to be.

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

Well I haven't been out in Cheltenham yet. Or Gloucester. I don't get out much these days, I've got two kids so I'm stuck at home but every where's good if you're in good company.



➔ Gloucester got the five points they needed in Italy last weekend but lock Marco Bortolami is gunning for more today.



➔ MARCO BORTOLAMI knows a thing or two about Italian rugby – their ultra-physicality, set-piece competitiveness and willingness for a battle – but he also knows Gloucester should take another significant step forward in the Heineken Cup this afternoon.

The Italian second row crossed for his first European try in the less than exotic Centro Sportivo San Michele last weekend but Gloucester's 40-17 victory was hardly a thing of beauty.

"I think it was a performance that was ok but nothing more – we didn't do one thing that was at the level we really wanted," Bortolami said. "In some respects we made it hard for ourselves with some mistakes and that kept the difference between the teams far closer than it should have been.

"They kick a great deal of ball in the first-half which means they make very few mistakes but we had some opportunities and probably didn't make the most of them. We had a job to do and that was to take maximum points – when you

effectively start chasing a game you do things slightly differently than normal – but we must be aware of that this weekend and not fall into the same trap.

"I am sure Calvisano will make it as difficult as possible for us because they are a proud team but we must maintain our focus and intensity and get the job done again."

Bortolami was in the second row alongside Will James and although Gloucester dominated the scrummage, Calvisano's line-out routine was pretty impressive. But





their task today is verging on the Herculean should Gloucester click as they have been doing in the Guinness Premiership.

"The important thing from our point of view is that we have re-found the movement game that was such a success over the last two years," Bortolami said. "We experimented at the start of the season in certain aspects of our approach and performance and that was important for the development of the side this season.

"But we are a phase-based team who move the ball and when we do that to



**I am sure Calvisano will make it as difficult as possible for us because they are a proud team but we must maintain our focus and intensity and get the job done again.**



the best of our ability we are a good team. In Europe, the most important

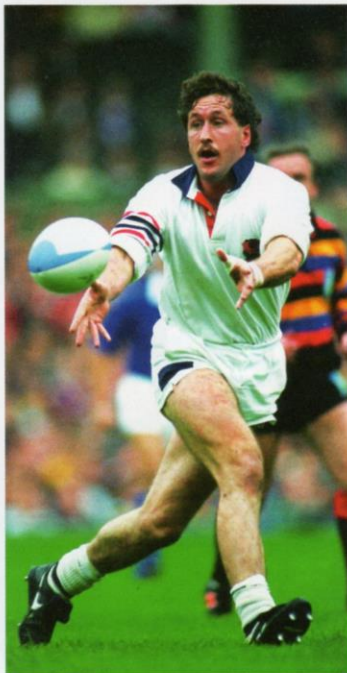
thing is not to make too many mistakes because the level demands that you are always competitive. The really great European teams are immaculate in all the small details and that is something we must get right this weekend to build on what we have done in the competition.

"If we can do that then I am positive we can cause any side problems – we just cannot afford to be careless and take our foot of the pedal. This is very important for us and today is the next stage in that process."



## DAVE KING'S WORLD OF RUGBY

 **Dave King unearths more glorious little tit-bits on the game from around the world in another insightful programme contribution.**



WHEN Rory Lawson's grandfather, the incomparable commentator Bill McLaren was asked to name his greatest Lions XV from teams he has witnessed over many decades he included former Gloucester Rugby Club great - Mike Teague.

Bill's team was as follows; J.P.R. Williams, Gerald Davies, Mike Gibson, Jeremy Guscott, David Duckham, Barry John, Gareth Edwards, Fran Cotton, Peter Wheeler, Graham Price, Willie John McBride (Captain), Gordon Brown, MIKE TEAGUE, Fergus Slattery and Mervyn Davies.

Interesting to note as the Lions tour to South Africa in 2009 comes nearer to reality, that the only player to be sent off against the Lions was a former Gloucester player. None other than our former half-back Duncan McRae. Duncan was playing for New South Wales when his dismissal came on the tour of 2001.

A point of interest for the majority of Kingsholm faithful is "where are they now?" the whereabouts of former players and staff. To fill in a few of those gaps the following may be of interest. On the playing front: Peter Richards and James Bailey (London Irish), Haydn Thomas and Mark Irish (Bristol), Rudi Kiel (Sale), Gary



OUR former director of coaching, Nigel Melville who is now the U.S.A. Rugby chief executive states that Rugby Union is growing at a staggering rate with almost 800 high schools now playing the game compared to just 200 five years ago. The number of children playing in the U.S.A. is estimated to be 40,000. Nigel pointed out in his recent statement that 40% of all registered players in the states are women. Tonga and Munster have recently paid visits to America and according to Nigel made a big impact. Previously it had always been the situation that the game had a profile in the university – George Bush played wing at Yale and Bill Clinton played for his college while on a Rhodes scholarship at Oxford and then for Little Rock in Arkansas.

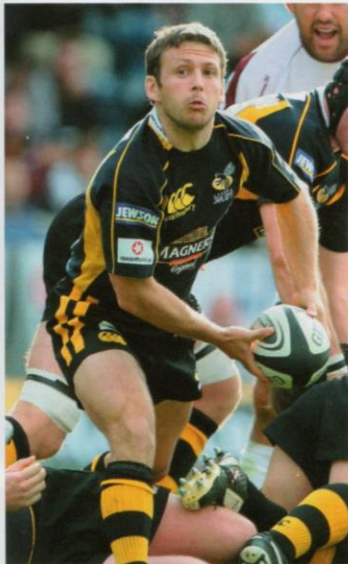
Powell (Cardiff), Phil Vickery (Wasps), Andy Gomarsall (Harlequins), Marcel Garvey, Chris Forthey and Craig Gillies (Worcester) Adam Balding (Newcastle), Jon Goodridge and Jonathon Pendlebury (Leeds), Adam Caves, Terry Sigley, Richard Stott (Moseley), Rob Jewell (Esher), Simon Ward, Dan Tuohy, Tom Skelding and Clive Stuart-Smith (Exeter), Simon Amor and Rory Greenslade-Jones (London Scottish) Bruce Fenley (Old Patesians) Federico Pucciarello (Munster), Peter Swatkins (Sedgeley Park), Andy Deacon, Rob Fidler, Mark Cornwell and Rob James (Cinderford) Alex Page (Blackheath), Craig Emmerson (Halifax), Thinus Delpont (Japan), Patrice Collazo (Racing Club de Paris), Adrian Frost (Southend), Mark Davies and James Bashford (Lydney), Rob Elloway (Cornish Pirates), Rob Thirlby



(Redruth), James Merriman (Neath), Chris Paterson (Edinburgh), Ludovic Mercier (Petraarca), Dimitri Yachvili (Biarritz), Henry Paul (Leeds), Rodrigo Roncero (Stade Francais), Nick Runciman (London Welsh), Rory Teague (Tarbes)

On the coaching front – Richard Hill and John Brain (Bristol), Philippe St. André and Kingsley Jones (Sale), Sean Holley (Ospreys), Paul Turner (Newport), Andrew Stanley and Tony Windo (Worcester), Tim Smith (Gloucester Old Boys), Nigel Melville (United States of America), Rob Baxter (Exeter), while Alistair Saverimutto is involved in the game of soccer as chief executive of A.F.C. Bournemouth.

Three former Gloucester players were named in the Barbarian's squad which faced the Combined Services in the annual remembrance match held at the Brickfield Stadium, Plymouth last month. They were Mark Davies, Tony Windo and Nick Runciman.



Our former scrum-half, Simon Amor is certainly in demand, upon leaving

Wasps at the culmination of last season he retired from full-time professional rugby where he took up no fewer than three positions. He was appointed as the performance director with U.K. Sport; this organisation directs the development of sport within the United Kingdom. He is also the head coach of the England Women's Sevens team, not to mention the fact that he is also a part-time player/coach with the emerging London Scottish in national league 3 South.

Gareth Archer who was a playing colleague of Dean Ryan at Newcastle and Bristol settled in New Zealand when he retired from the game. He trained as a carpenter and joiner and settled in North Auckland, however, he has now returned to his native North-East where he is in joint ownership of a construction company. The former lock is not completely lost to the game for he assists with coaching at one of his former clubs, Durham City. He is also a member of Durham Rowing Club. Gareth had to retire from playing in 2004 when a back injury finished his playing career.

With the game at the mercy of the I.R.B. and their various thoughts on the E.L.V's it is hoped that we will not be subject to

another change in the value of try scoring. When point scoring was introduced in 1890 the try was worth one point, it became three points in 1899 and then four in 1971 and to the current five in 1992.

The hotel incorporated in Twickenham's South Stand provides six rooms which will have a view of the playing pitch. The capacity of the ground is 82,000. England will be hoping to stage the 2015 world cup there. A record eight countries are hoping to bid for the position of host; they are England, Japan, Scotland, Italy, Australia, Ireland, South Africa and Wales.

Stade Francais have taken shirt design into a state of disbelief. Their shirt depicts the face of Blanche de Castile who was the wife of Louis V III it carries 14 different poses!

National League One club, Exeter, have a squad of 49 players in a determined bid to gain Premiership status, they recently attracted a crowd of 6,871 to Plymouth Albion's Brickfield Stadium in an all Devon encounter. Their forwards coach is Rob Baxter who spent a brief period here at Kingsholm in 1997. Rob made over 300 league appearances for the Sandy Lane club before retiring two years ago.





GLOUCESTER RUGBY 33  
NORTHAMPTON SAINTS 10



## Saints Stunned

Saturday, November 29, Attendance: 13,449



GLOUCESTER claimed their second successive bonus point victory in the Guinness Premiership with a commanding performance against Northampton Saints.

Managed superbly by Ryan Lamb and Olly Barkley, Gloucester looked a threatening side when they played with width and maintained possession. Barkley managed the midfield combinations like a dream and all of Gloucester's tries came via players with England experience.

Barkley, a second minute replacement for Anthony Allen, was involved early. He came flat from Lamb's pass and delayed his pass perfectly towards Mike Tindall, who thundered through a gap, found Lesley Vainikolo on the outside and he delivered the scoring inside pass for Iain Balshaw for the 49th try of his Premiership career.

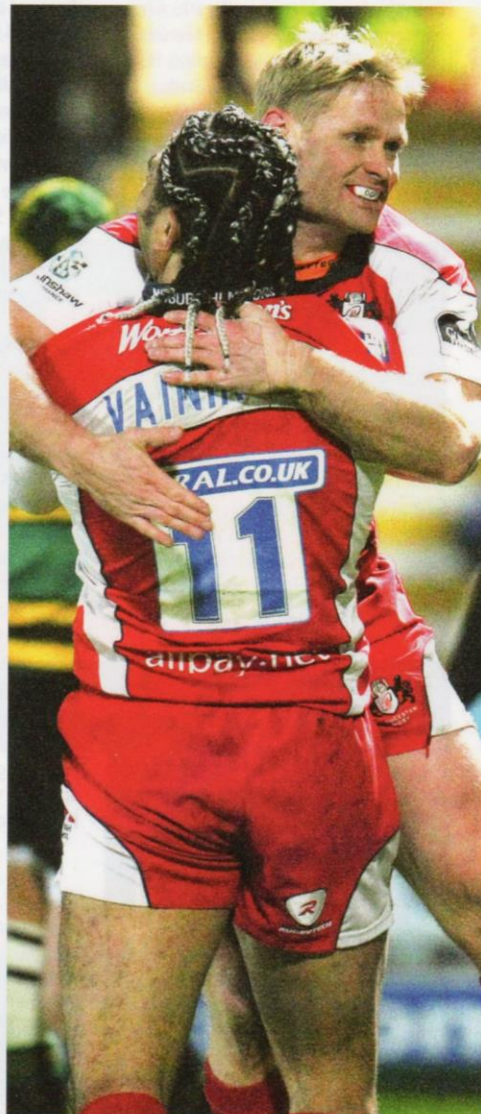
Nine minutes later Gloucester scored again. Luke Narryway started the move with a great off-load towards Peter Buxton, Alasdair Strokosch took over with a good carry and when play came to the left, Narryway rounded it off with the try.

That made it 15-0 and minutes before the break, the home side grabbed their third try. Dave Lewis and Lamb started the move from a scrum, Balshaw and Barkley swept it forward and the centre finished off the move by wriggling out of a tackle for his first Gloucester try.

To give Saints credit, they also looked to play and in Ben Foden, Stephen Myler and Chris Ashton they had plenty of threat. They also got around the contact area thanks to Roger Wilson and Scott Gray and it was the flanker who scored to round off a heavy period of Northampton pressure.

But Gloucester were not going to let this go and when Rory Lawson gather Myler's chip, he sent the home side on their way again and when Barkley gathered possession close to the touchline he sent a lovely little grubber behind the Saints defence for Lesley Vainikolo to chase and the giant winger dived in to score.

There were still chances for Gloucester but they were restricted to two more Lamb penalties to seal the contest and yet more vital points.



### Man of the Match



Ryan Lamb produced a hugely effective display from stand-off



### Coach's Comment

"We looked a dangerous side when we kept the ball – it was another very important victory," head coach Dean Ryan.





Timeline

5 mins	
Lamb pen	3-0
11 mins	
Balshaw try	8-0
20 mins	
Narraway try, Lamb con	15-0
24 mins	
Myler pen	15-3
40 mins	
Barkley try	20-3
51 mins	
Gray try, Myler con	20-10
58 mins	
Vainikolo try, Lamb con	27-10
64 mins	
Lamb pen	30-10
74 mins	
Lamb pen	33-10

Gloucester Line-up

15	Iain Balshaw	(1t)
14	Lesley Vainikolo	(1t)
13	Mike Tindall	(capt)
12	Anthony Allen	
11	Matthew Watkins	
10	Ryan Lamb	(3p, 2c)
9	Dave Lewis	
1	Nick Wood	
2	Olivier Azam	
3	Carlos Nieto	
4	Will James	
5	Marco Bortolami	
6	Peter Buxton	
7	Alasdair Strosch	
8	Luke Narraway	(1t)
REPS		
16	Scott Lawson	(Azam)
17	Alasdair Dickinson	(Wood)
18	Adam Eustace	
19	Apo Satala	(Tindall)
20	Rory Lawson	(Lewis)
21	Olly Barkley	(1t) (Allen)
22	Willie Walker	(Watkins)





## PETER ARNOLD

**Peter Arnold will be hanging out the bunting if Gloucester can do the double over Calvisano today, salutes Lesley Vainikolo's score against Northampton and will be ready for a right old cracker against London Irish next week.**

### JOB DONE

I THINK that the best description of last weekend's safari to the home of today's welcome visitors would be 'job done'. We needed the bonus point, and got it. This sort of match always provides a potential banana skin, and it's all too easy for things to go wrong. Not that I think there was ever any danger of actually losing the game, but we could easily have failed to get those vital four tries.

Consider. After a long, chilly trip to a town which, with respect, doesn't claim to be one of Italy's architectural or historic

marvels, the boys had to take on a highly motivated side, in front of their own fans, in a small stadium – about 3,500 capacity – on a heavy, narrow pitch which didn't really allow our preferred expansive game. So the result, while not quite out of the top draw, was a very decent one

I think we also have to give Calvisano a great deal of credit for their achievements over the years. The town isn't much more than a large village, with a population which would fit into a half-full Kingsholm. To have remained in the upper echelons of their national club game for so long is certainly creditable. A sort of Cinderford with pasta, you might say. ("Mama mia, old butty!")

Let's see how they cope on a decent pitch in a proper, traditional English club ground. No matter how they cope, we all hope they have a highly enjoyable visit.

### DANCE OF THE FLYING SWAN

OUR last home game, against Northampton, was a delight. A good bonus-point win, some excellent rugby

and Kingsholm under lights, not to mention the Cinderford Band – you couldn't ask for anything better.

We played our best rugby in the first half, but my own favourite moment came along in the second period, when Les Vainikolo scored his try. It just didn't look on. A kick through, perhaps a little overcooked, ball bouncing fiendishly and Big Les in hot pursuit, more in hope than expectation, one thought. Then came the magic moment. Suddenly, Les transformed himself from a Boeing 747, hurtling down the runway, to something with all the aerial grace of a prima ballerina starring in Swan Lake. The ball was actually over the line when he started his dive, yet somehow he latched on to it and touched down with all the aplomb in the world. I hope the BBC has footage of it, because it would make an excellent entry in the 'What Happened Next' slot in 'Question of Sport'.

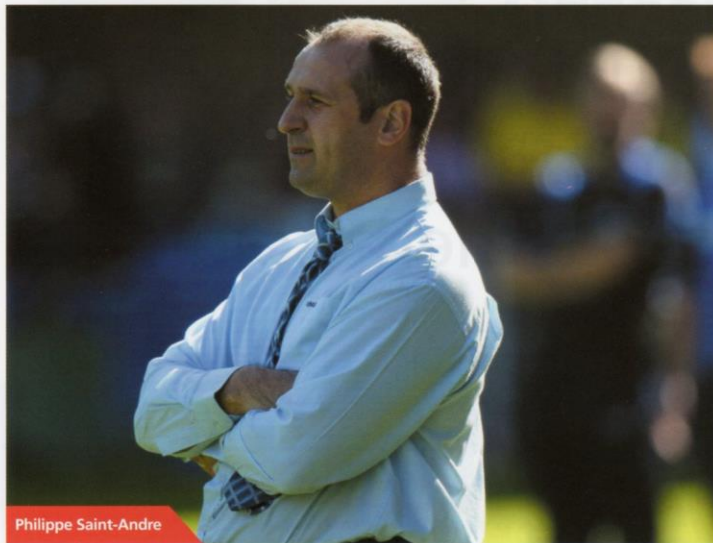
There was much to savour in that game, not least the Barkley/Tindall centre partnership renewed from their days together at Bath. But let's give due credit to Northampton. They came here ready and willing to play rugby, and did so, even in the face of adversity. They're going to beat some good teams before the season in out, They have some god players and their Franklins Gardens ground has become a fortress rather like Kingsholm.

Bath came within a nylon filament of coming unstuck there a few weeks ago, and our return fixture there isn't going to be a stroll in the park.

But Les's aerobatics will live in the mind for a long time. He'll be even harder to stop if he's going to start flying as well as running.

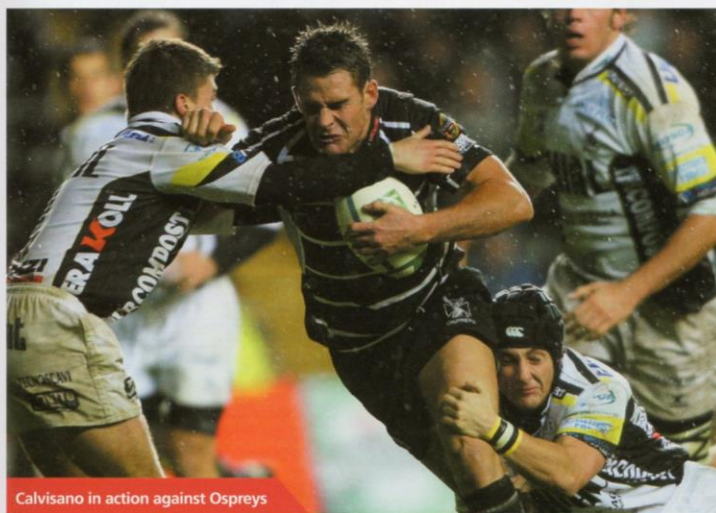
### FAREWELL PHILIPPE

DID you see that our old boss, Philippe



Philippe Saint-Andre





Calvisano in action against Ospreys



Lesley Vainikolo scoring a try

Saint-Andre is packing his bags and leaving Sale? It seems a bit odd to announce the fact at this pivotal stage of the season, and on the face of it, the announcement won't do anything to help the confidence of the club's players.

As far as I know, all is sweetness and light up there in Cheshire, but a few uncharitable thoughts do cross the mind. Philippe, after all, left Gloucester amid a welter of criticism and recrimination, and his departure from Bourgoin (I think it was) was acrimonious in the extreme, so you'll pardon me if I cock a quizzical eyebrow at the situation. After all, no one could describe his stint at Sale as anything less than successful.

Of course, I could just be a boring old cynic, and the situation could be quite straightforward, but one does wonder.

The upside is that our old mate Kingsley Jones is taking over as Director of Rugby up there. We know Kingsley very well, as a formidable flanker and a quite superb captain. I think he will make Sale an even more difficult proposition than they are now.

**// Our last home game, against Northampton, was a delight. A good bonus-point win, some excellent rugby and Kingsholm under lights, not to mention the Cinderford Band – you couldn't ask for anything better. //**

Good luck to both of them!

#### **CONDIMENTS OF THE SEASONING!**

...as my old friend, Tony Coates, used to say at this time of year. It was funny first time round, but after about ten years of repetition, it did start to pall a bit.

Be that as it may, this is our last home

game before Christmas, and indeed, of 2008. Not that the players can put their feet up. Next Saturday's trip to London Irish bids fair to be one helluva match. I doubt if anyone, at the beginning of the season, would have foreseen that the game would be a top-of-the-table encounter on the last Saturday before Christmas.

This is going to be the most serious examination of our recent credentials you can imagine. The Exiles have been on an unstoppable roll lately and confidence will be extremely high. What's more, they will be in front of a highly partisan crowd, whose motivation will be enhanced by a good dose of Christmas spirit, allied to a positive Niagara of Guinness it will be a splendid occasion, and we will have to be on tip-top form to come away with a win.

And don't forget. A wounded Bristol await the following week.

Interesting times. I hope you have an absolutely splendid Christmas, and I'll see you next year.



## FAN ZONE WITH BOB FENTON

**➔ The chance to meet the legendary Ian Jones was too good to miss for Bob Fenton a few weeks ago and he will back in the Shed this afternoon, cowering away from an enforced Christmas shopping trip....**

SOMETIMES being a humble programme scribe can have its perks, take a few weeks ago for example when the esteemed programme editor (his words, not mine, ed) called to ask me to take part in a TV thing with the great Jones The Taller – or ex All Black and Gloucester second row Ian Jones, to the uninitiated. All I had to do was to arrange some

cohorts and meet up for a chat.

The TV bit was straightforward – loved the question about this new tradition at Gloucester of booing your own players after they score – but the most interesting thing was listening to Ian waxing lyrical about our new man from New Zealand – Greg Somerville.

He has, according to a man who played behind him on many occasions, all the attributes to become a Gloucester legend. A player who Jones claims could still "... walk back into the All Blacks front row any time he likes..." and is "... still the best in the world...".

Ian says we shouldn't expect to see Greg running in too many tries or much in the way of 'flash' ball handling, but if we want one of the most reliable scrummagers in

the game, then we've got our man. Sounds good to me, and with that recommendation there is absolutely no pressure on Greg to perform. Can't wait to see him running out in a cherry and white shirt.

Oh one more thing while I'm name-dropping about hanging out with Ian Jones: Wasn't it odd to see another professional player (name omitted to avoid undue embarrassment) waiting patiently to get the great mans autograph... We're all kids at heart!

Fortunately the new tradition mentioned by Ian Jones was not present at the Northampton game a couple of weeks ago when the – in my opinion – very sensible decision to abandon the experiment to play music after scores was abandoned.

It's good to know that the marketing guys listen to the views of supporters and after such a public protest it was stopped. I don't think anyone is against change, but one of the very core values of the club is its tradition, and this did not sit well with it. So thanks for listening guys, and thanks for acting.

Instead we were treated to a brass band who had the sense to learn how to play "Gloucester Boys" before they turned up. As soon as they struck up the tune they had the crowd eating out of the palm of their hands.

Having said that I didn't know whether to laugh or cry when they started playing an Abba tune and hearing almost the entire Shed joining in – well not just joining in, but clearly knowing all the words! 3,000 people blowing their cool all at once – not an edifying site, but good fun all the same.

Actually based on this reaction perhaps an idea for our marketing team to consider is to screen the 'Mama Mia' movie in



Gloucester's Ian Jones celebrates the team's victory





Apo Satala of Gloucester tries to evade a tackle during their game against Saints



Greg Somerville

the bars after the game, imagine the site – thousands of shed doyens dressed in 70s glitter suits all tripping along for a sing-song. On second thoughts, don't think that at all – the image in my mind is making me quite queasy.

Back to today, another Heineken Cup match and the reverse fixture from last week. I watched the match from the warmth of my armchair, it looked a might cold over there and it was great to see the cherry and white army out in force as usual. Maybe the Italian fans don't have a great deal to sing about, but all you could hear were the Gloucester fans singing away. Great shot of an Italian fan waving a Gloucester shirt at one point though, I'm sure the post-match party was fun.

Unfortunately for reasons known only to Sky TV the coverage stopped before the end to be replaced with a trailer for the

cricket, so we never got to see the end of the match. Checking with the BBC later I was surprised to read that Jack Forster had scored one of the tries. Great prospect that



**Ian says we shouldn't expect to see Greg running in too many tries or much in the way of 'flash' ball handling, but if we want one of the most reliable scrummagers in the game, then we've got our man**



he is, I think even he can't quite manage to cross the try line when he has not even got onto the pitch.

Of course he was mixed up with Mark Foster – after all to those unfamiliar with all things Gloucester there is a likeness. After all winger Mark is almost the same size and stature as one of Jack's legs...

Finally, isn't it great to be at Kingsholm today – a chance to escape from the terrors of Christmas shopping. I fear that my respite is short lived, the words Cribbs and Causeway were mentioned this morning, and a trip to that seething hell looks to be on the cards...

But as this is the final programme before Christmas and the New Year, may I take this chance to wish everyone here a great Christmas and a (early) happy New Year. We know Santa is a Glos fan as he wears cherry and white, so our present of five more Heineken Cup points and away wins at London Irish and Bristol must be in the bag.



CALVISANO  
GLOUCESTER RUGBY

17  
40



## Gloucester march on

Pool Six, Round 3, Saturday, December 6



**GLOUCESTER** did what they had to do in Italy last weekend to keep alive their Heineken Cup qualification hopes.

Their six-try, five point victory means they are within touching distance at the top of the pool following a disjointed display that was still far too solid for the Italians.

It was a mixed afternoon for the home side, who competed exceptionally well in the line-out and were competitive at the contact area, but who also had Nicola Cattina red carded for a punch aimed at Alasdair Strokosch.

When they maintained possession through the phases Gloucester were hard to live with and they opened the scoring after six minutes when Ryan Lamb grabbed an interception from Paulo Buso to race 40 metres to the sticks.

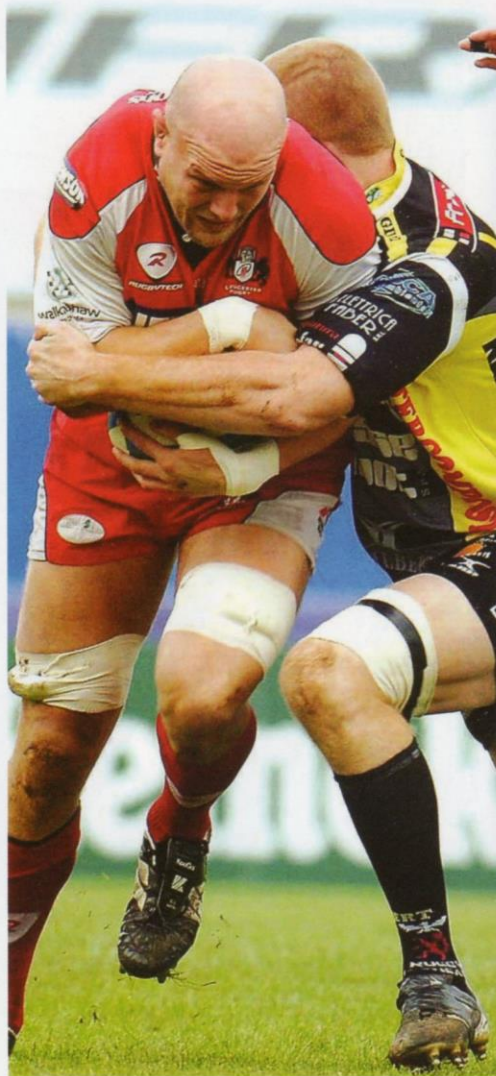
The second try came when Gloucester dominated a series of scrummages on the Calvisano line and number eight Luke Narraway

touched down. And they got within touching distance of a bonus point try when Matthew Watkins and Narraway combined and the number eight sent a scoring pass to Marco Bortolami.

Two minutes after the break, Gloucester scored their bonus point try when they kept a move going to the right and Mark Foster scored via Lamb's little pass. Olly Barkley's conversion made it 26-3 but then the hosts hit back with a couple of scores of their own.

First, Buso broke from a scrum and fed Ludovico Nitoglia in for the score. They then lost Cattina to a red card but scored again when replacement prop Alistair McKenzie was bundled home following a period of good home pressure to make the score 26-17.

But Gloucester broke out late on to grab a fifth try when the referee awarded them a penalty try when Foster was pulled back and almost immediately replacement Mike Tindall hoovered up a loose ball, shot past Paul Griffin and went beneath the sticks to complete Gloucester's Italian job.



### Man of the Match



Number eight Luke Narraway produced another very good performance.

### Coach's Comment



"We just had to get the job done and that is what we did with five points," said head coach Dean Ryan.





## Timeline

- 3 mins**  
Lamb try, Barkley con 7-0

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- 15 mins**  
Buso pen 7-3

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- 28 mins**  
Narraway try, Barkley con 14-3

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- 37 mins**  
Bortolami try 19-3

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- 42 mins**  
Foster, Barkley con 26-3

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- 47 mins**  
Nitoglia try, Buso con 26-10

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- 70 mins**  
McKenzie try, Fraser con 26-17

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- 74 mins**  
Penalty try, Barkley con 33-17

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- 77 mins**  
Tindall try, Barkley con 40-17

## Gloucester Line-up

15	O Morgan	
14	M Foster	(1T)
13	M Watkins	
12	O Barkley	(5C)
11	L Vainikolo	
10	R Lamb	(1T)
9	R Lawson	
1	A Dickinson	
2	S Lawson	
3	C Nieto	
4	W James	
5	M Bortolami	(1T)
6	P Buxton	(capt)
7	A Strokosch	
8	L Narraway	(1T) Penalty try
REPS		
16	Tindall	1T (Watkins)
17	Walker	(Lamb)
18	Lewis	(R Lawson)
19	Azam	(S Lawson)
20	Satala	(Strokosch)
21		
22		