



OFFICIAL MATCHDAY PROGRAMME OF GLOUCESTER RUGBY 2008/2009 ISSUE 10 • £3.00

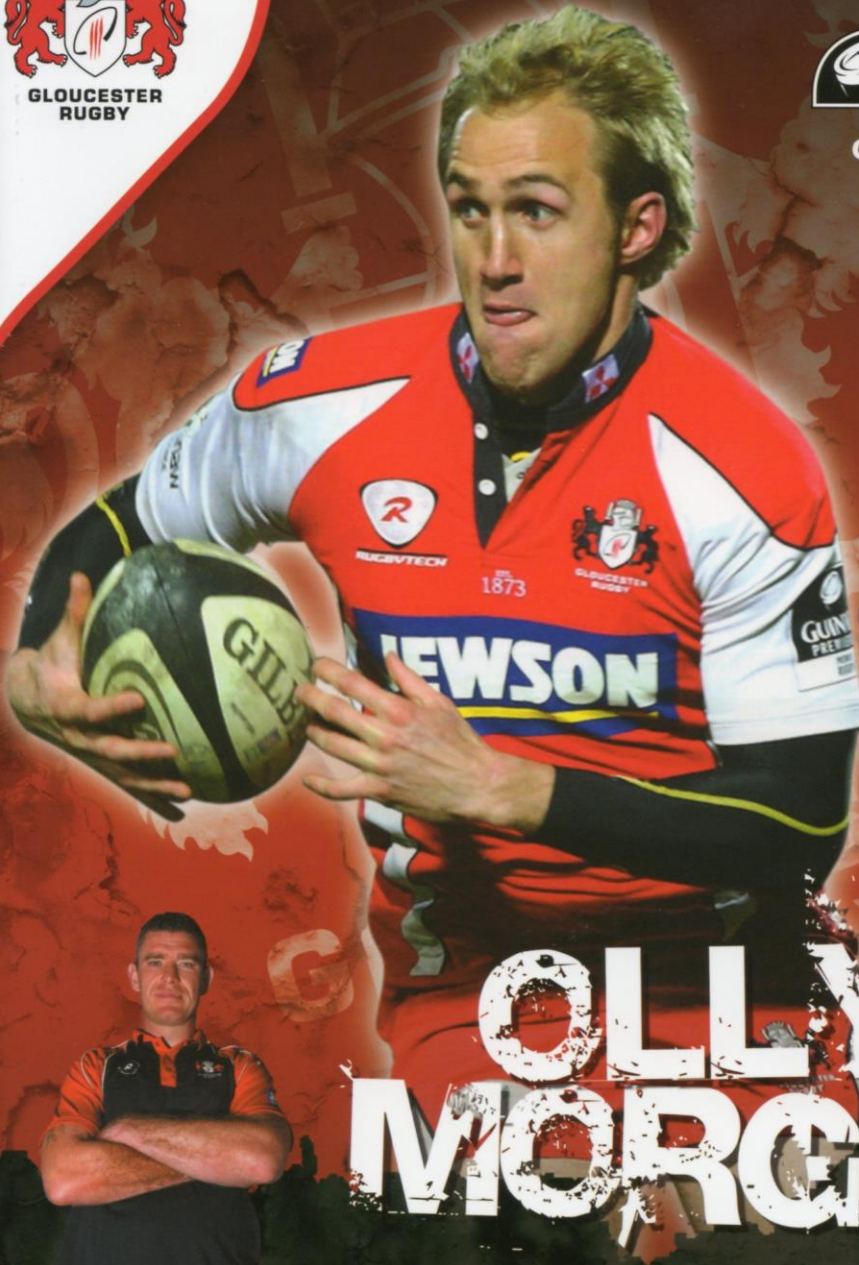


Gloucester Rugby  
v Saracens

03.01.09 15.00



SARACENS



# OLLIE MORGAN

## DEAN RYAN

On Gloucester's last two games

## NOAH CATO

Flying winger

## GLOUCESTER CAN GO PLACES

By Chris Hewett

## SARACENS PREVIEW

All you need to know

**PLUS:** match action, ticket news, community update, Peter Arnold and Dave King



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## CAPTAIN'S CORNER



IN THE space of seven days we have been written off and ridiculed, praised and patted on the back - it can be a strange game rugby.

While we were securing a bonus point away to Bristol last weekend, London Irish, the team that put us to the sword seven days previously were losing away to Saracens. As I say, all in a week's work in this season's Guinness Premiership.

The one thing we did as a group of players was to keep our perspective following defeat at the Madejski Stadium. We appreciated we didn't play anywhere near the levels we set ourselves but we wanted to use that desolate dressing room feeling as a motivation for the long-term.



**Today, we begin 2009 with another huge contest against Saracens. They are coached by Eddie Jones, one of the best coaches in the world and have a core of very young but very gifted players.**

Images Library, every



It meant we substituted some of our structure and organisation against Bristol for higher energy levels and enthusiasm and we were rewarded with a massively important victory for us.

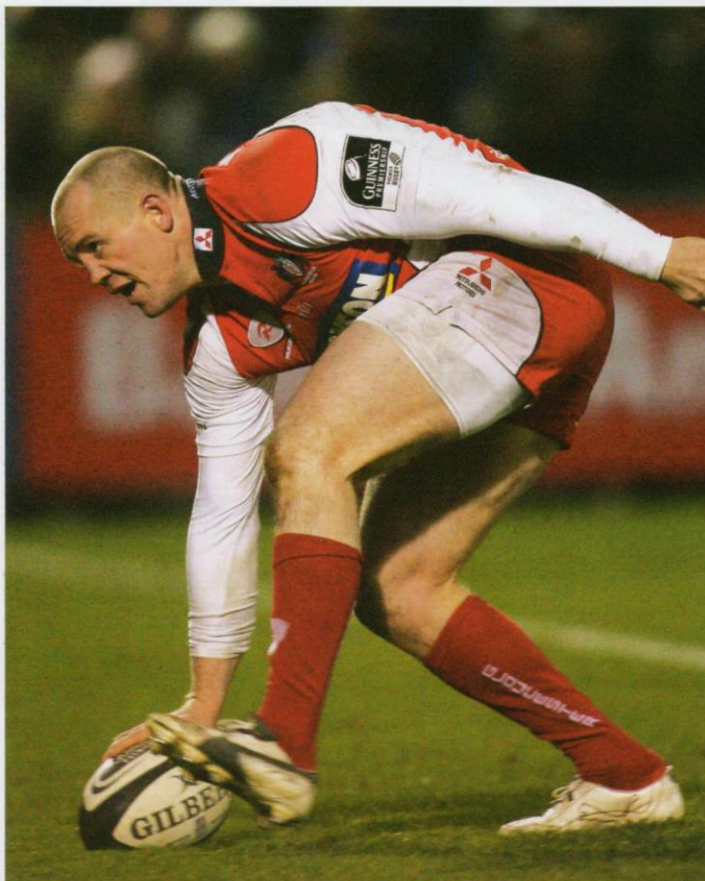
Our task now is to combine the two aspects in a series of performances that can really take us forward. There is no doubt we are a good side and are capable

of playing some excellent rugby, but it was the little things against Bristol that made the difference – a great scrum engagement, a stolen line-out, a big defensive tackle or our willingness to have a real go for the bonus right until the end.

Today, we begin 2009 with another huge contest against Saracens. They are coached by Eddie Jones, one of the best coaches in the world and have a core of very young but very gifted players.

As they showed last weekend, they also have plenty of grit to grind out a win against London Irish and will be a real test this afternoon. It is up to us to replicate all the good things last week, get a bit better in our execution and start the year in the best possible way.

It was fantastic to see so many supporters at the Memorial Stadium last weekend so please get behind the boys again this afternoon and cheer us to another victory.







➔ Despite a thrashing at London Irish five days before Christmas and past misery in the play-offs, Chris Hewett of the Independent believes all the ingredients are in place for another successful 2009 at Kingsholm – he just asks for a bit of patience.

A crowd of people is shown in a dark setting, likely a stadium, with a red and black color scheme. In the foreground, two vertical banners with the Guinness logo and the word 'GUINNESS' are visible. The Guinness logo is a harp, and the word 'GUINNESS' is written in a stylized, bold font. The crowd consists of men and women of various ages, some looking towards the camera and others looking away.

**HAPPY NEW  
YEAR?  
HOPEFULLY**



## HAPPY NEW YEAR? HOPEFULLY



There are many who think the economic downturn - or credit crunch, or recession, or depression, or Great Crash, or whatever - will pass Gloucester by. You can see their point: look at all those props and hookers you have, all those back-row forwards and scrum-halves and midfielders. Not to mention the good old Kingsholm faithful, who continue to worship at this particular cathedral in numbers that would, if they were replicated down Canterbury way, have the good Archbishop performing cartwheels in his pulpit. Like Leicester, Northampton, Harlequins and Worcester (who perform rather better off the field than they do on it), the Cherry and Whites can look forward to a semi-prosperous new year while everyone else heads for the nearest street corner with a pile of "Big Issues" under each arm.

And what separates Gloucester and the rest of the quintet from the rest? Simple. They own their own homes. Bristol flogged their ground for a miserable £10,000 a decade ago, while Newcastle are in the process of flogging theirs as we speak. Three London sides are sharing with football clubs (although Saracens, today's visitors, have money to burn and will presumably hotfoot it out of Watford the moment a decent plot of land becomes available). Up north, Sale are in a similar situation. As for Bath... well, we've heard enough about trustees, charity commissioners and local "nimbys" to last us several lifetimes. For God's sake, either build a bloody stadium on the Wreck or plough up the field and lay it down to wheat.

Yes sirree, Gloucester are as well placed as anyone to beat the blues. (Not the Cardiff Blues, perhaps, but that's another story). So why the doom and gloom? To be sure, the performance at London Irish

a couple of weeks ago was a shocker: the combination of a rickety scrum, powder-puff tackling and a desperate kicking game generally equals a towelling, as England found out during the autumn. But every side is entitled to the occasional rough one, especially when



**I know Gloucester have yet to win the title, but they've won the league more than once, and we all know they've won it. In other words, finishing top after 22 matches still means something inside the rugby fraternity**



an overwhelming majority of the first-choice backs are either orthopaedically challenged or virally horizontalised. And anyway, London Irish are seriously hot on home soil just now.

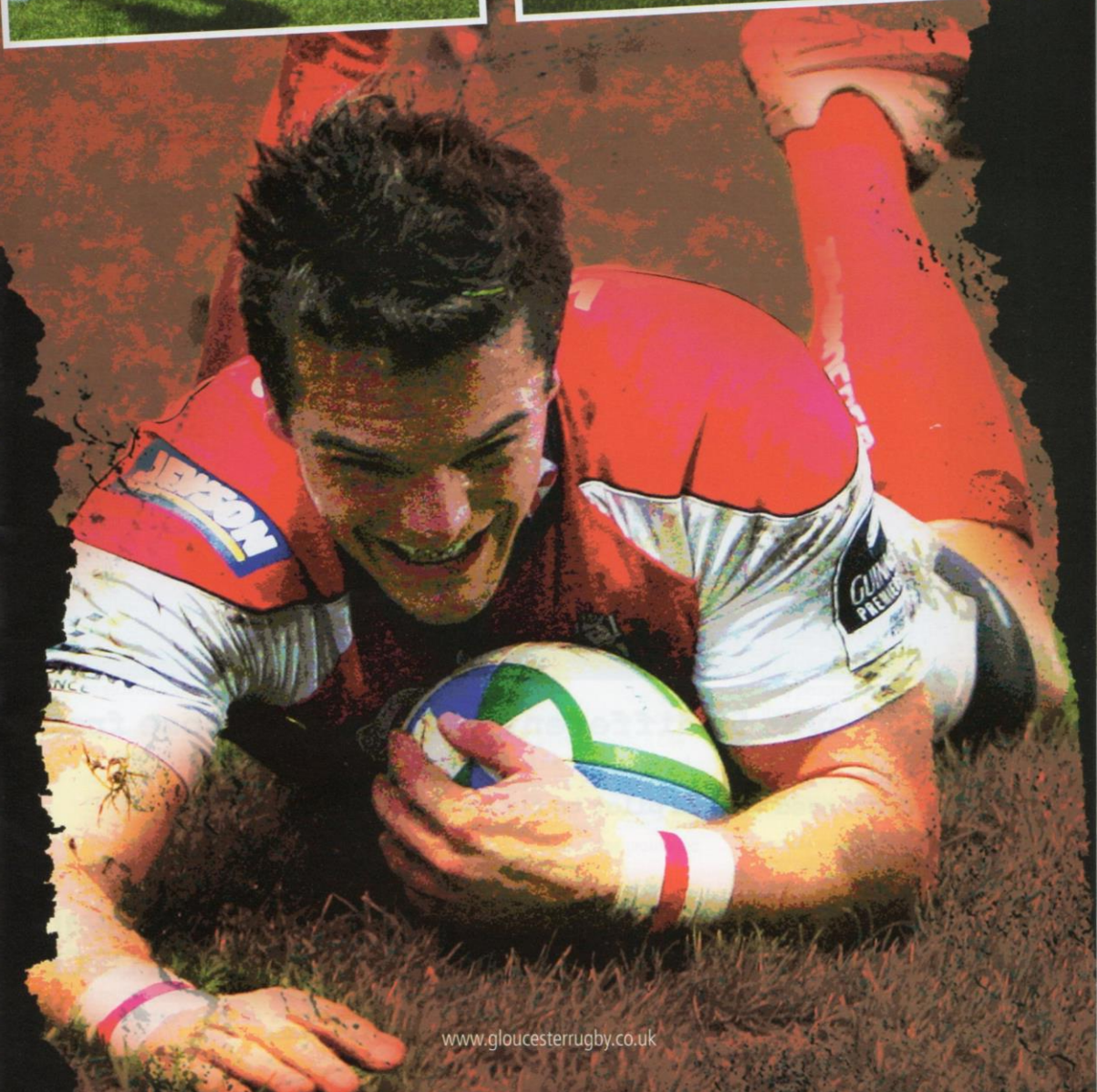
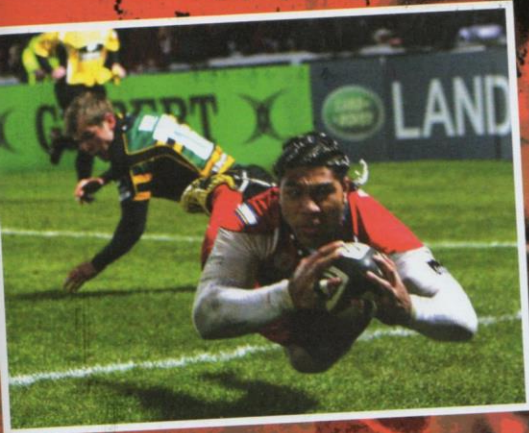
The fact of the matter remains that on their day, Gloucester can dish out a 20-point beating to any side in the Premiership, and in an elite division as competitive as this, is it not plain greedy to ask for more? Certainly, it is too easily forgotten that under Dean Ryan, the team finished top of the pile after 22 regular-season matches in both 2007 and 2008. They did it in 2003 as well, by the minor margin of 15 points. The fact that they messed up in subsequent one-off matches on each occasion is not exactly a side issue, but it is not the stuff of catastrophe either. During this present decade, Gloucester have reasserted themselves as one of English rugby's powerhouse clubs. If you don't consider

that to be worthwhile, think back to the 1990s and remember the misery of irrelevance.

Richard Hill, who coached at Kingsholm a squillion years ago and is now involved with some other lot 40 miles down the road, said recently that Gloucester "are as a rugby club should be". He was not for a moment being disparaging to Bristol; rather, he was telling it how it was. All Premiership clubs should have the facilities we have come to know and love at Kingsholm and Hartpury College, which is why Premier Rugby itself is so keen to drive up standards through the application of minimum criteria. Hill also said this: "I know Gloucester have yet to win the title, but they've won the league more than once, and we all know they've won it." In other words, finishing top after 22 matches still means something inside the rugby fraternity. Maybe, it means more than winning the Premiership final, even though the suit-and-tie brigade insist otherwise. During his time as coach at Kingsholm, Nigel Melville had his backside kicked for publicly suggesting something along those lines. He was right, though. And the people who did the kicking were wrong.

So before the paying public start fretting too much over whether Dean Ryan is the man for the job or Olly Barkley was worth the money, or tie themselves in knots wondering if Ryan Lamb will ever be more than a brilliant prospect, it might be advisable to consider the following: Gloucester are still at the right end of the table and may well finish ahead of the rest for a third year running; they still have the winning of their Heineken Cup pool in their own hands; and they could still win the EDF Energy Cup, which is more than a dozen other teams, both English and Welsh, can say. Bah humbug? Try Happy New Year instead.









## RYAN'S REVIEW



**Our defeat at London Irish was the worst since 2004, can you explain that?**

**DR:** MAYBE we lost sight of certain elements in our game like energy levels and the enthusiasm that comes from that in our search for structure and organisation. We conceded three tries from kick returns that were very well taken but having studied the match again, I don't think they created anything we couldn't handle or deal with.

Their kicking game was excellent – better than ours on the day – and the size of the defeat was a shock but sometimes that happens and I think I am right in saying it was the first time in 30-odd matches we failed to take a point of any sort so that is not a bad record.

The players were exceptionally honest in their appraisal of the defeat but we don't want to lose that feeling we experienced – one victory won't erase either the pain



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or the memory of it and that is important because we can use it as a gauge moving into the new year.



**You started that process against Bristol last week. Was it a case of lessons starting to be learnt?**

**DR:** I AM not sure lessons would be the right way to describe it because we understood where we went wrong against Irish. We sacrificed some of our structure for high energy and intensity levels and as a result it produced a messy contest.

That does not surprise me and our task is to combine the both of them in the future. I thought the little things painted a very big picture against Bristol. We kept our composure and discipline at scrum-time in an area I thought we were dominant in, we were on the front foot defensively and knew that we could be a threat from long distance in the latter stages of the game.

There was a real enthusiasm to keep going and to still be looking for a fourth try in the final minute said a great deal about our desire and determination. We are all pretty confident we can play better but we are not in a bad position moving in to 2009 and that is great for us.



**Can you give an update**



Action against London Irish



Tindall scoring a try against Bristol Rugby





Today's visitors Saracens

**on the injury situation at the moment?**

**DR:** WELL, we seem to be over the sickness but we still have some injuries in and around the squad but this is the sort of time we expect the likes of Gareth Delve, Qera and Sinbad back on deck.

We have worked without the two back rowers all season and they will obviously add real quality to the squad when they are back. Delvy is still slightly ahead of Q but hopefully they will both be around by the end of the month.

Sinbad will be the same and we will also keep an eye on Andy Hazell's bone bruising

which is taking some time to clear.



**Today we welcome Saracens. They are well capable of creating problems?**

**DR:** THEY have recruited well, have a fantastic work ethic in their forward pack and a genuine threat in the wide areas. Saracens have been a very competitive club for a number of years and will be pushing hard come the end of the season, I am sure of that.

But today it is about us and taking on what we did against Bristol, moving it forward and playing well at Kingsholm again.



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# TODAY'S TEAMS

Saturday 3rd January 2009 15.00  
**Gloucester Rugby v Saracens**



**REPLACEMENTS**

16	TITTERBELL	+
17	DICKINSON	+
18	EUSTACE	+
19	JAMES	+
20	LEWIS	+
21	WALKER	+
22	WATKINS	+

**REPLACEMENTS**

15	KYRIACOU	+
17	VISAGIE	+
18	VYVYAN	+
19	SAULL	+
20	BAULUNI	+
21	BARRITT	+
22	POWEL	+

**Guinness Premiership Table**

Pos	Team	Pld	W	D	L	F	A	TF	TA	TB	LB	Pts
1	Bath Rugby	10	7	1	2	250	203	28	20	2	2	34
2	London Irish	10	7	0	3	244	154	27	13	2	3	33
3	Gloucester Rugby	10	7	0	3	239	196	26	22	4	0	30
4	Sale Sharks	10	7	0	3	170	136	14	8	1	1	30
5	Leicester Tigers	10	6	1	3	218	189	20	17	0	1	27
6	Harlequins	10	5	1	4	238	209	26	19	2	2	26
7	Saracens	10	5	0	5	227	188	19	15	1	4	24
8	Worcester Warriors	10	3	2	5	168	196	13	20	0	2	18
9	London Wasps	10	3	0	7	176	224	12	23	0	4	16
10	Northampton Saints	10	3	1	6	186	233	15	22	0	1	15
11	Newcastle Falcons	10	2	1	7	150	231	14	21	0	2	12
12	Bristol Rugby	10	1	1	8	125	232	11	25	0	3	9

**Today's Officials**

Referee: Andrew Small

Touch Judges: Andrew Pearce & Bob Mullis **22-16**

4th: Ashley Rowden

Replacement Ref:





# PERSONAL FILES

with **Olivier Azam**



by Ian Randall

## *Olivier Azam*

Renowned for his aggressive, hard hitting style, Azam had to compete with Wallaby international Jeremy Paul and England international Andy Titterrell for the No2 shirt last campaign. However he is a key element in Gloucester's forward pack, loves to scrummage and will be key this afternoon







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

That would be watching my dad playing for our town. He used to play number eight, all my uncles were playing rugby as well. The area I am from in France, the South West, it's the main sport, everybody plays at any kind of level.

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

I think there's a few good ones, I quite like Will Greenwood. He knows what he's talking about, he's always got a positive way of saying things. He's new and I think he's going to be really good at that job.

*3. Can you explain Cricket?*

Woody explained the rules to me when England was winning the Ashes, but to be honest I don't even think there is one cricket ground in France! It's a new thing for me, but I don't think England are doing very well.

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

I think it's Peter Buxton, I think he has a 1985 Ford Fiesta or something like that, yeah, it's really flash.

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

I think I would like to buy a mountain, because it's part of where I'm from and it's close to my heart.

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

I support two charities, one is for breast cancer, and the other one is an association that I created with some friends in France, which is to help kids in hospitals. The concept of it is to raise money so children who spend a long time in hospital can have fun times.

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

There are a lot of Olivier's in French Rugby. I think Olivier Merle, he's a man and a half, and because he's a good friend of mine.

*8. Can you play a musical instrument?*

I wish I could play the guitar or the piano.

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

U2 is my favourite band, even before I could understand English I used to have all their CD's

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

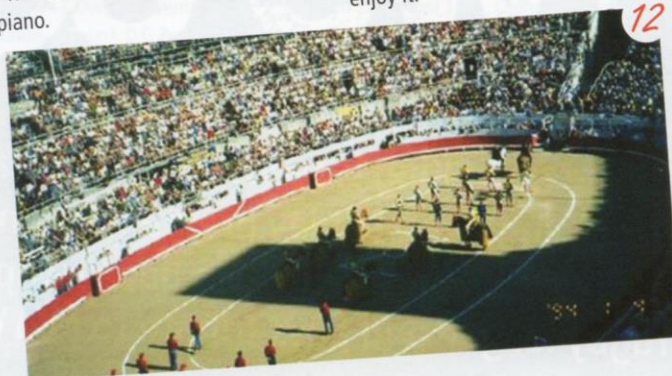
I'll take Woody, he's been to Oxford and he's meant to be good. And I will pick Iain Balshaw because he knows the most random things, so if there's some weird questions I'm sure he'll know about it.

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

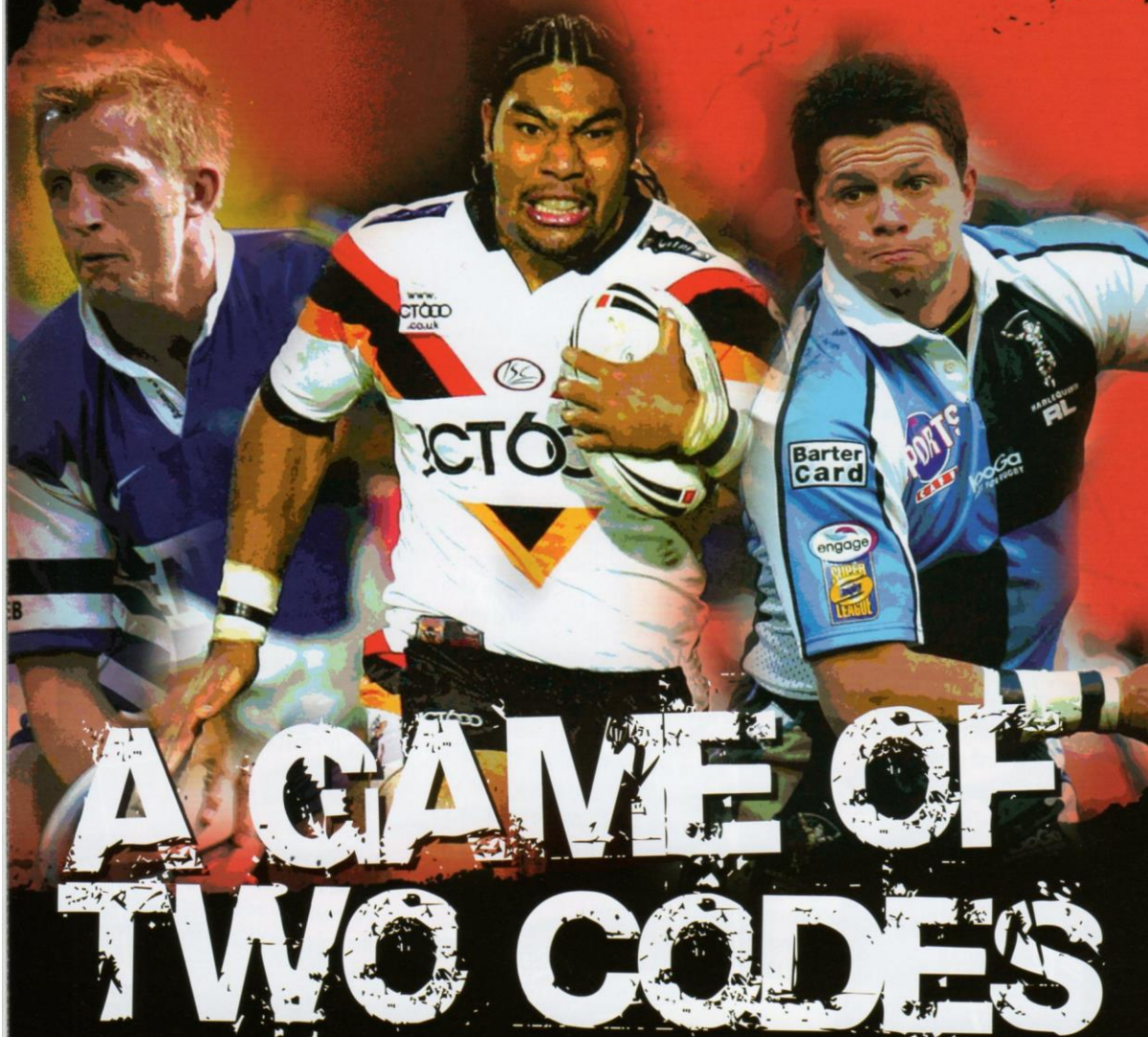
Over complicate things, rugby is really simple. I think it's the only sport where you're not allowed to pass the ball forward, so you have to carry it - that's it!


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

I would say it was where I am from in the Féria, bull racing, because of the tradition and the atmosphere, the way people are really there to enjoy it.







 Dave King is renowned for unearthing little gems in the matchday programme and here he charts the movements of players who have swapped Kingsholm for rugby league and pays tribute to Ken Wilson.





PLAYERS who have made the switch from rugby league to rugby union is nothing new – indeed several players who have moved to the game of union have gone on to represent England.

Here at Kingsholm we have seen Henry Paul and Lesley Vainikolo wear the international shirt with pride. Both Andy Farrell of Saracens and Jason Robinson of Sale Sharks have also been awarded caps and Robinson's impact on the fortunes of the national team could hardly have been greater considering he scored their only try in the 2003 World Cup final.

But the move to rugby league from union is less well chronicled, simply because the venture from south to north has not been so appealing since the advent of professionalism in the union code.

The most accomplished player at both codes in recent seasons was the former Welsh international fly-half Jonathan Davies. The mercurial half-back was equally adept in both forms of the game and was instrumental for both Wales and Great Britain.

However, Gloucester has, through the passing of time, seen players vacate union and Kingsholm to seek their fortunes in the north of England. The names on Gloucester's rostrum are Billy Hall, Dave Holland and Alf Wood and are all guaranteed their places in Kingsholm history too.

Wood headed north in 1908 while Billy Hall and Dave Holland joined their former club colleagues at Oldham R.L.F.C. five years later. The three former Gloucester players were included in the Great Britain team that toured Australia in 1914. Wood had made 39 appearances for this club and scored 30 tries in his two seasons at Kingsholm.

He made three appearances for England in 1908 against France, Wales and Ireland before his move to the other code. Hall was a centre who made 138 appearances for Gloucester and scored 31 tries. Holland

made a century of appearances for this club, scoring 16 times.

Holland left Gloucester in 1909 to join Devenport Albion before his move north in 1913. The trio were attracted by the magnetism of the 13-man code and the prospect of a paid career in the sport they loved. Their moves left Gloucester in a state of shock, yet 40 years or so later Kingsholm was awash with a state of disbelief when a player, who had just been capped by England, decided the 15 man code was not to be his lasting choice. His name was Ken 'Tug' Wilson.

Kenneth James Wilson was born on the 23rd November at Newark and was educated at King's Grammar School in Grantham. The burly prop forward began his local rugby career with Gordon League - he had previously played for Kesteven R.F.C.

Wilson was serving in the Royal Air Force as a physical training instructor and was stationed at what was then R.A.F. Innsworth. The prop forward was called up to face France at Twickenham in January 1963 and Ken replaced his county front row prop forward Bev Dovey of Rosslyn Park.

The England team was: J.G.Wilcox (Oxford University), P.B.Jackson (Coventry), M.S.Phillips (Fylde), M.P.Weston (Durham City), J.Roberts (Sale), R.A.W.Sharp (Wasps, Captain), S.J.S.Clarke (Cambridge University), K.J.Wilson (Gloucester), J.D.Thorne (Bristol), N.J.Drake-Lee (Cambridge University), T.A.Pargetter (Coventry), J.E.Owen (Coventry), D.C.Manley (Exeter), D.G.Perry (Bedford), D.P.Rogers (Bedford). Referee: Mr.D.C.J. McMahon (Scotland).

He had appeared in the first England trial in Cumberland that season and was selected for the second trial at Kingsholm. He was unable to appear because of a chest injury sustained in a County Championship match against Cornwall. Although England defeated France 6-5 on Ken's debut he was never selected to represent his country again.

'Tug', was also an accomplished boxer

and he became the Royal Air Force heavyweight champion. His prominence was enhanced when he defeated the then heavyweight boxing star of the 1950's – Billy Walker. However, a hand injury put an end to Ken's pugilistic ambitions.

He decided to leave Kingsholm in 1963 to move to Oldham R.F.C. and he made his debut for the rugby league club on the 24th August versus Rochdale in a 20-7 win. The 1963-64 season was one of triumph for Oldham as they won the Division Two title and reached the Rugby League Challenge Cup semi-final where they were defeated by Hull Kingston Rovers.

For 10 years, Ken served Oldham R.L.F.C. and was known locally as 'Mr Reliable' where he received considerable acclaim. He decided to retire in 1973 and it was on 19th October that he played his last game against Australia in a 44-10 defeat.

On that autumn day, Ken appeared in the following Oldham R.L.F.C. line up; 1.M.Murphy, 2.G.Munro, 3.M. Elliot, 4.A.Wainwright, 5.C.O'Brien, 6.R.Gatley, 7.P.Astbury, 8.T.Clanson, 9.K.Taylor, 10.K.Wilson, 11.F.Hall, 12.W.McCraken, 13.J.Reynolds, 14.Sub- J.Blair, 15.Sub- A.Daley.

Ken's 10 years of service to the club was rewarded with a testimonial match played between Oldham R.L.F.C. and an England XIII. The match was played at Watersheddings - the home of Oldham - on 22nd April 1975, Oldham defeated the England team 27-5

In total, Wilson made 321 appearances, including five as a substitute for Oldham and scored 25 tries and 6 goals in a rugby league career stretching from 1963-1973. He was appointed as the club coach in the 1970-71 season. Sadly, Ken passed away in 1983.

Gloucester Rugby have made a significant contribution to the other code during their history, not always a recognised fact in the continuing movement between the games two versions.



## DAVE KING'S WORLD OF RUGBY

 **Dave King looks around the world and picks out more tit-bits in his ever insightful World of Rugby.**

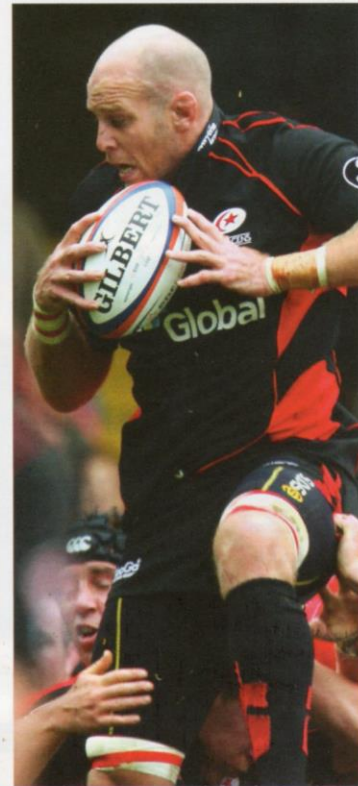
Saracen's Kris Chesney is only the second player to have made 200 Premiership appearances; following in the footsteps of London Wasps lock forward Simon Shaw. Kris has encountered 100 defeats in that grand total!



This has been a troublesome season for our former wing three-quarter Marcel Garvey. He has not featured for Worcester since the Middlesex Sevens held last August; the former St. Peter's High School graduate is suffering from a blood flow problem in his hip joint.

Amazing, former Bath and England hooker, Graham Dawe proves that age is no barrier for he played the full eighty minutes in a National League One fixture against Newbury earlier this season?

One Premiership record has been equalled this season when 10 kicks at goal were missed. The match in question was the London Irish versus Bath encounter at the Madejski Stadium. The three other matches where 10 kicks were missed in a match were in November 1997 Bath versus Richmond, Harlequins versus Wasps in September 2000 and Northampton versus Bristol in November 2001.



Are lock forwards becoming shorter? Not really, but when you consider the height of former Scotland lock Richard Metcalfe, who was the tallest player to participate in Test rugby, maybe. Metcalfe who won 11 caps from the 2000-2001 season was taller than most British locks, such as Martin Bayfield, Derwyn Jones and Peter Stagg who all stood at 6ft 10 inches. Richard Metcalfe registered his height at 7ft. 1 inch

One rule that causes discussion among followers of rugby union is the 'blood' replacement. A player can be brought on for a maximum of 15 minutes to take the place of a team mate; if the repairs take longer than the allotted time then the original player is not allowed to return to the field of play.





Of the 38 players in our current squad who have appeared in the senior team, 12 made their first team debut from the kick-off, while the remaining 26 were replacements during the course of a game. No player will probably surpass or equal the feat of Lesley Vainikolo who scored an amazing 5 tries on his debut at Leeds on the opening day of the last season.

Mick Cleary of the Daily Telegraph has been named the Rugby Union Correspondent of 2008 in the first ever Rugby Business Awards, Mick was presented with the his award at the Rugby Expo gala dinner by New Zealand legend Sean Fitzpatrick, Sean was the chairman of the judging panel.

Harlequins flying wing three-quarter Ugo Monye, could easily have become an athletics star. When he was fifteen years of age he ran the 100 metres in 10.6 seconds. Ugo, improved on that time to record 10.46 seconds, he appeared in the English Athletics Association Championship running



alongside Olympians Mark Lewis Francis and Tyrone Edgar. However, the 6ft 2inch flyer opted for Rugby Union. Ugo attended Lord Wandsworth College in Hampshire following in the footsteps of Jonny Wilkinson and our former scrum half, Peter Richards.

Despite the credit crunch, Twickenham was able to reflect on the year of 2008 with satisfaction. Sales increased for non-international matches. The Babcock Trophy competed for in the Army versus the Navy match attracted in excess of 50,000. The Guinness Premiership final had a capacity of 82,000, and a record 65,000 attended the E.D.F. Energy Cup Final.

Twickenham is not only used for Rugby Union, it is now a venue for concerts, last year five shows were held there generating revenue of just over £2million.

Since the introduction of bonus points, how we have enjoyed meeting Bristol. In 2001 we scored four tries in a 38-16 victory at Kingsholm, Success continued at Kingsholm in 2001-02 when we recorded 6 tries in a 51-17 rout. In 2002-03 we once again scored 6 tries in a 45-18 win. In 2005-06 season we scored

4 tries in a 35-13 victory. Four more tries came in a 27-0 win in the 2007-08 season. We emphasised our continuing success this season with our 39-10 victory in November.

To prove that it is not just home advantage we enjoy over the Memorial Ground club we were 68-12 winners at the home of Bristol R.F.C. in 2001-02 with 5 tries. In 2002-03 six tries were scored in a 38-21 win, with James Forrester scoring a hat-trick of tries. Our success continued in 2005-06 when four tries were recorded in a 41-9 win.

Former Harlequins and former England Sevens World Cup winner Chris Sheasby is now the Head Coach of South West One club – Bracknell. Chris envisages that his club will catapult into the National League, once they can gain promotion from the regional leagues.

Ryan Lamb's full hand in our 39-10 win over Bristol came 108 years after Percy Stout became the first player to do so for this club versus Weston in 1898. Percy recorded 4 tries, 5 conversions, 2 penalties and one drop goal. In today's values that would equate to 39 points. The same total we accumulated in our resounding November victory!



GLOUCESTER RUGBY  
CALVISANO

48  
5



## Calvisano Crushed

Saturday, December 13

Attendance: 13,970 Referee: Tim Hayes (WRU)



GLOUCESTER took their try tally against Italian side Calvisano to 12 in two matches with another comfortable Heineken Cup victory at Kingsholm.

Two tries each for Matthew Watkins and Lesley Vainikolo ensured Gloucester got over a shaky first-half performance to keep alive their qualification hopes at Kingsholm.

After two early Ryan Lamb penalties were cancelled out by Gerard Fraser's charge-down score, it took Gloucester until the end middle of the second quarter to score their first try but it was a beauty. From a scrum, Gareth Cooper exchanged passes with Mike Tindall before sending Olly Morgan hurtling through on a lovely break and he fed Mark Foster for the score.

There was plenty of endeavour and effort from the likes of Apo Satala, Luke Narraway and Lamb but it took Gloucester until the half-time whistle to score again when Narraway latched onto a short pass to bundle through a tackle and reach the sticks.

However, after the break it was all Gloucester. They could have scored immediately after the break but when



Narraway, Satala and Cooper all combined, the scrum-half reversed his pass brilliantly for Vainikolo to step his way to the line.

Watkins then got his first try when he picked up a ricochet in midfield and burst to the posts. Lamb kept up his immaculate kicking record with the conversion and Gloucester were 34-5 ahead.

It summed up Calvisano's afternoon that from their first meaningful attack of the half, they conceded their fifth try. Number eight Alessandro Zanni carried from a

scrum but when he looked to off-load, Vainikolo jumped in, hoovered up the catch and went the length of the field for his second try.

There was still time for Gloucester to add a sixth try when Rory Lawson combined with a Lamb from a turn-over at a line-out, Tindall came into midfield and delayed his pass perfectly for Watkins on a great angled break, who sped home for his second try.

Lamb converted to make it eight from eight as Gloucester eased home.

### Man of the Match



Full-back Olly Morgan produced an outstanding display.

### Coach's Comment



"We had to get maximum points to give ourselves a chance in the next two games and that is what we have done," head coach Dean Ryan.





**Timeline**

2 mins	
Lamb pen	3-0
5 mins:	
Lamb pen	6-0
20 mins:	
Fraser try	6-5
28 mins:	
Foster try, Lamb con	13-5
40 mins:	
Narraway try, Lamb con	20-5
57 mins:	
Vainikolo try, Lamb con	27-5
63 mins:	
Watkins try, Lamb con	34-5
67 mins:	
Vainikolo try, Lamb con	41-5
74 mins:	
Watkins try, Lamb con	48-5

**Gloucester Line-up**

15	Olly Morgan	
14	Mark Foster	(1t)
13	Matthew Watkins	(2t)
12	Mike Tindall	
11	Lesley Vainikolo	(2t)
10	Ryan Lamb	(2p, 6c)
9	Gareth Cooper	
1	Alasdair Dickinson	
2	Andy Titterrell	
3	Carlos Nieto	
4	Adam Eustace	
5	Marco Bortolami	
6	Peter Buxton	
7	Apo Satala	
8	Luke Narraway	(1t)
REPS		
16	Scott Lawson	(Cooper)
17	Dave Young	(Nieto)
18	Greg Somerville	(Dickinson)
19	Will James	(Eustace)
20	Ryan Lawson	(Cooper)
21	Willie Walker	(Tindall)
22	Olly Barkley	(Forster)





## PETER ARNOLD

**With tough Christmas deadlines to meet and the presents still to wrap, Peter Arnold offers up his thoughts on Gloucester's defeat to London Irish, Dean Ryan's link to Wasps and wishes his readers – both of them – a very happy new year**

### OUCH

THE problem about writing for the programme at this time of year is that printers, and associated trade, are as entitled to their festive break as anyone else. This means that deadlines become inordinately long, and I'm actually sitting down to pen this on the Monday before Christmas, almost two weeks before either of my readers will be perusing it.

This, in turn, means that the Bristol game is still several days away so I can't comment on that. The other side of that coin is that the London Irish defeat is still

painfully fresh in the mind. Ouch!

I wasn't really surprised that we got beaten. Playing away to the Exiles, with their fortress mentality and fanatical army of supporters is always a daunting proposition. Their recent run of excellent form certainly compounded the problem, but the scale of the – let's face it – thrashing was a bit of a shock, and we can't be blamed for looking for the reasons behind the debacle.

The first thing which struck me was that several reports commented on Gloucester's apparent lack of energy. That's not an accusation which gets levelled at us very often: win or lose, we've never had to accuse the side of not trying or not playing their hearts out.

My immediate reaction was to wonder about the sickness bug which appears to have swept the team during the days before the game. Carlos Nieto was knocked out of contention days beforehand, and then, on the day of the match, Olly Barkley had to drop out. Then, Olly Morgan threw up at half-time and then had to be replaced.

You know what it feels like when you've suffered from one of these winter bugs. You may get over the symptoms fairly quickly, but you feel washed out for days afterwards. I've no proof, of course, but this would explain the seeming lack of energy which the lads displayed on the day.

I don't suppose that the rumours connecting Dean Ryan with a move to Wasps did any good, either. They were firmly denied by DR, of course, but doubts about the future of the coaching hierarchy can play merry hell with the players' morale.

I'm not really looking for excuses. Irish are obviously a formidable side, especially at home, and deserve to be top of the table at this point. Fair play to them, but whether they can keep it up until next May remains to be seen.

### MUSICAL COACHES

THIS game becomes more like soccer every day. Now, we seem to be adopting the same sort of unhealthy speculation about our coaches and Directors of Rugby which has bedevilled round ball game managers for years.

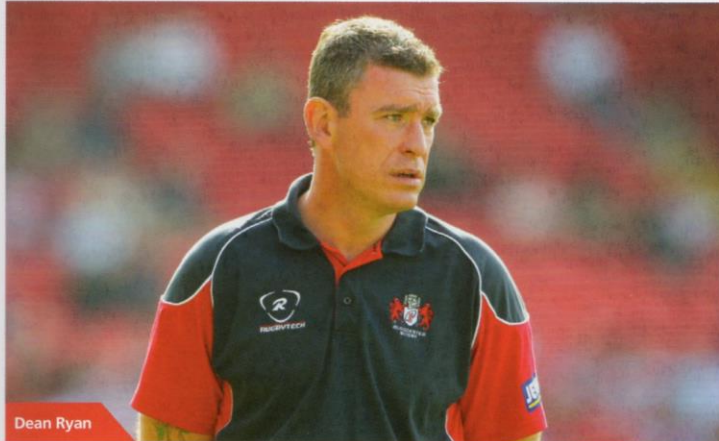
The rumours about Dean Ryan defecting to Wasps have been firmly denied by the man himself, but his repudiation of the story won't put an end to the Chinese whispers slithering around the place. I don't know who started that hare running, but whoever it was, I hope his baubles turn square and rot at the edges.

The whole thing seems to have started at about the time Philippe Saint-Andre announced he was to leave Sale at the end of the season. After that, the media seized on the situation at Wasps, which does seem to be a bit peculiar. I read that no fewer than 19 players have their contracts up for renewal, or otherwise, this season, and that there seems to be a



Gloucester in action against London Irish





Dean Ryan



Olly Morgan

general acceptance that Ian McGeechan is to step down, although I'm not aware that this has been confirmed.

You'd have thought that the obvious conclusion would be that PSA is going to Wasps. But, oh no, that would be too simple, and wouldn't give as much room for speculation as the pundits would like, so they look elsewhere.

Dean Ryan makes a fairly easy target. After all, he's played for Wasps so obviously he would be salivating to return, given the chance. At least that would be the way some of the London centred speculators would think. Of course, DR also played for Newcastle and Bristol, but neither of the clubs would appear to be able to afford him at the moment. Anyway, they're too far away from the Great Metropolis to be of any interest, anyway.

This much I will say. If you were the owner of a successful rugby club in need of a new Director of Rugby, why would you not take a gander at DR? He has a good record at Kingsholm, is well known and respected throughout the game, and is a decided personality.



**The only problem is that he doesn't want to leave Gloucester, so I urge everyone out there to keep their sticky fingers off our coach.**



The only problem is that he doesn't want to leave Gloucester, so I urge everyone out there to keep their sticky fingers off our coach.

#### HAPPY NEW YEAR

THE present economic situation obviously casts a shadow over New Year celebrations this year. Money is bound to be tight, and this could have an effect on the income of rugby clubs, great and small. I read in the local press that some of our local clubs are already reporting a significant drop in bar takings, which isn't to be wondered at.

Of course, larger clubs may also face a reduction in gate money, although this will be offset to some degree by season ticket holders. It is to be hoped that the situation will have eased somewhat by the time renewals are due.

However, it doesn't do any of us a bit of good simply sitting around and moping about The situation. Being miserable makes things worse for everyone. Where better to cheer yourself up than Kingsholm, where you can see some excellent rugby in unique surroundings, and enjoy the odd pint with your mates, even if you can't afford to indulge in quite so many of the jars of nectar as you would like?

I firmly believe that the best thing we can do for the country is to keep our collective peckers up and face an uncertain year with as much resolution and confidence as we can muster.

Have a super 2009. I repeat what my friend Martin Kirby wrote in the 'Citizen' the other week.

"Nil illegitimae carborundum" Don't let the bastards grind you down!



LONDON IRISH 42  
GLOUCESTER RUGBY 12



## Irish Eyes Smiling

Saturday, December 20

Attendance: 12,706 Referee: Sean Davey



GLOUCESTER suffered their worst Guinness Premiership defeat since 2004 when leaders

London Irish claimed a bonus point victory at the Madejski Stadium.

Fuelled by a robust forward effort, plenty of vigour at the turn-over and their ability to strike from long-range, Irish produced a masterful performance that rightly had them singing from the rafters in Reading.

Gloucester, seriously under-powered and lacking in dynamism, were well beaten and only had three Ryan Lamb penalties and one from Willie Walker to show for their efforts.

They were 6-0 down early thanks to two Peter Hewat penalties and then conceded their first try. Mark Foster's kick was fielded by Delon Armitage and the England full-back burst through the cover and beat Lamb to the corner.

Despite a 24th minute Lamb penalty it was nearly all Irish and they scored again four minutes later. This time it was Topsy Ojo who returned a high kick, he made good ground and fed the outstanding Steffon Armitage. He got to within a metre of the line and when the ball came back, scrum-half Paul Hodgson nipped beneath the sticks.



Lamb did land two further penalties before the break but Hewat's third three points of the half left Irish 21-9 ahead. Gloucester did have their best period immediately at the start of the second half but could not find the try that would have broken the game back open.

Replacement Willie Walker made it 21-12 but three more Hewat penalties between the 53rd and 68th minutes closed the game out for Irish. And with five minutes

to go, they scored twice more to seal a bonus point.

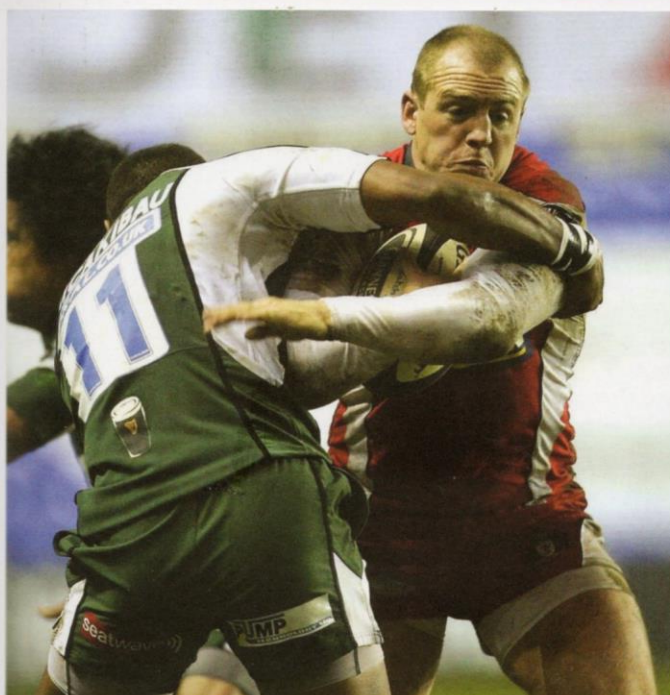
First, number eight Chris Hala'ufia collected Jack Adams' clearance and set Sailosi Tagicakibau away on a run and he beat a number of defenders to reach the line. And in the last minute, Gloucester coughed up the ball in open field and replacement flanker Declan Danahar picked up and raced clear to seal a momentous win for the league leaders.

### Coach's Comment



"The illness is not an excuse at all. London Irish were better than us in virtually every aspect of the contest," head coach Dean Ryan.





## Timeline

7 mins	
Hewat pen	3-0
15 mins	
Hewat pen	6-0
11 mins	
D. Armitage try	11-0
24 mins	
Lamb pen	11-3
28 mins	
Hodgson try, Hewat con	18-3
30 mins	
Lamb pen	18-6
35 mins	
Hewat pen	21-6
37 mins	
Lamb pen	21-9
42 mins	
Walker pen	21-12
52 mins	
Hewat pen	24-12
64 mins	
Hewat pen	27-12
68 mins	
Hewat pen	30-12
75 mins	
Tagicakibau try	35-12
80 mins	
Danahar try, Hewat con	42-12

## Gloucester Line-up

15	Olly Morgan	
14	Mark Foster	
13	Matthew Watkins	
12	Mike Tindall	(capt)
11	Lesley Vainikolo	
10	Ryan Lamb	3p
9	Gareth Cooper	
1	Nick Wood	
2	Scott Lawson	
3	Greg Somerville	
4	Marco Bortolami	
5	Alex Brown	
6	Peter Buxton	
7	Alasdair Strokosch	
8	Luke Narryay	
REPS		
16	Olivier Azam	(S. Lawson)
17	Alasdair Dickinson	(Wood)
18	Will James	(Bortolami)
19	Apolosi Satala	(Buxton)
20	Rory Lawson	
21	Willie Walker	(Morgan 1p)
22	Jack Adams	(Lamb)



BRISTOL RUGBY  
GLOUCESTER RUGBY

10  
29



## Bonus point joy

Saturday, December 27

Attendance: 11,856, Referee: David Rose



MIKE TINDALL'S second try with the final play of the game earned Gloucester a second

bonus point victory of the season against west country rivals Bristol.

It was a tough, tight, tense affair - characterised by two packs of forwards who slugged it out from the start. Gloucester had the better of it in the scrummage but Bristol's ability to disrupt and get the likes of Dan Ward-Smith and Alfie To'oala on the front foot were key.

But Tindall's all-round expertise in defence ensured Gloucester held sway. And they took the lead after only four minutes with a cracking try from Olly Morgan.

Luke Narraway went quickly from a free-kick, Rory Lawson delivered the pass and Morgan burst through the first few defenders and just kept going. As the cover converged, he had enough pace to get beneath the sticks for the score.

Ed Barnes and Ryan Lamb then exchanged penalties to leave Gloucester 10-3 ahead at the break and that kept the contest close for the second and third quarters as the game was littered with positional kicking and the forward packs going at each other.



It was a considerable afternoon for the likes of Nick Wood, Olivier Azam and Carlos Nieto and with 12 minutes to go, Gloucester got the vital second score. Sparked by replacement scrum-half Dave Lewis, they maintained possession before Tindall picked a devastating line to burst away to the sticks.

They then scored again almost immediately when Alasdair Strokosch, Lewis, Lamb, Tindall and the rest were involved in a

sweeping move to the left and Adam Eustace made the telling break before setting Lesley Vainikolo up for the score.

Bristol did manage a score when David Lemi picked off Lamb's long pass to go in behind the posts but Gloucester were not done yet and when Lewis sent Olly Barkley up the centre, Gloucester swarmed over the ball and Tindall was able to spin away from the last tackle and bundle himself over for the fourth try.

### Man of the Match



Mike Tindall produced an outstanding all-round performance.

### Coach's Comment



"Our energy levels were high and we kept going until the end - it's a very important result for us," head coach Dean Ryan.





## Timeline

4 mins	
Morgan try, Barkley con	0-7
23 mins	
Barnes pen	3-7
25 mins	
Lamb pen	3-10
68 mins	
Tindall try, Lamb con	3-17
77 mins	
Vainikolo try	3-22
78 mins	
Lemi try, Strange con	10-22
80 mins	
Tindall try, Lamb con	10-29

## Gloucester Line-up

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