



OFFICIAL MATCHDAY PROGRAMME OF GLOUCESTER RUGBY 2008/2009 ISSUE 12 • £3.00



Gloucester Rugby
v London Irish

31.01.09 14.45



OLIVIER AZAM

DEAN RYAN

Looks back at Heineken Cup exit

LUKE NARRAWAY

Gloucester's growing leader

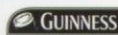
JAMES SIMPSON-DANIEL

Blasts back from injury

STEFFON ARMITAGE

Feature

PLUS: Fans Zone, Peter Arnold and all you need to know about London Irish



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CAPTAIN'S CORNER



IT IS AN honour and a privilege to be asked to captain Gloucester for the first time today.

Whenever you are asked to skipper a team and club of this magnitude it is a very special and humble experience and it has occupied my thoughts for the last couple of days.

We are obviously without Mike Tindall and Luke Narraway today - the two guys who have captained the side this season - and although we will miss their contributions massively, I am determined to do the job in my own way and lead by example.



They are top of the Guinness Premiership because they are robust, competitive and dangerous but today is solely about us – how desperate we are to compete, how feverish we can be and how infectious our enthusiasm is to get on the front foot.



Nobody in the squad needs reminding just what an important game this is this afternoon. We have not performed in recent weeks and as a side we are hugely motivated to put some of those wrong's right today.

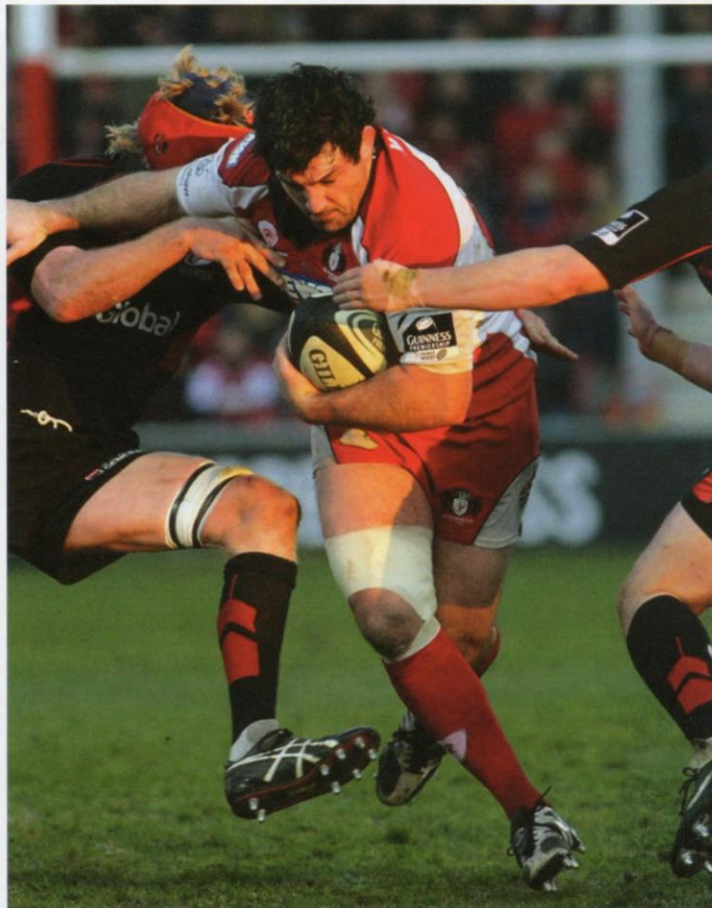
London Irish are a very good side. Their

fundamentals have long been based on an outstanding set-piece game but this season they have added a rapier-like potency from turn-over ball in broken field and we are naturally aware of their threat. They are top of the Guinness Premiership because they are robust, competitive and dangerous but today is solely about us – how desperate we are to compete, how feverish we can be and how infectious our enthusiasm is to get on the front foot.


We are coming off the back of a

disappointing end to our Heineken Cup campaign – nobody needs telling we didn't perform to our potential in Europe and that only adds to our motivation. In some respects we have been wounded in the last fortnight but that means we should return in frenzy today.

Please get behind the boys this afternoon – almost more than ever – it is now we really need all the vocal support we can get for what is one of our biggest games of the season today.





 It has been a particularly difficult few weeks for Gloucester and their stand-in skipper Luke Narraway. But here the number eight talks to the matchday programme about getting back to form.



LUKE BACK IN ANGER

LUKE BACK IN ANGER



IT'S BEEN a harrowing few weeks for all those down Kingsholm way, not least Luke Narryway, who has found himself subjected to all manner of hells in the Heineken Cup.

Without beating around the subject, it has been a ruinous fortnight for Gloucester in Europe. Defeat against the 14 men of Cardiff at Kingsholm – always an unpalatable thought at the best of times – and then another wet weather miss-hap in France last weekend pulled the plug on their dreams for another season.

For Narryway, the scrutiny has been greater than usual. Mike Tindall's untimely dead leg has meant the number 8 has skippered the side, part of his growing influence and maturity as a player who is also pressing for international recognition.

Look into his eyes during his recent Sky TV interviews and you will see a man ravaged by the effects of defeat.

"We all take it personally – there is nothing wrong with that – and sometimes that will come over in interviews immediately after a game when emotions on a whole range of issues are running at their highest," Narryway said.

"We care. Playing at this club should mean everything and it does. No-one sees inside the dressing room when players and coaches are in bits, it's easy to jump to conclusions but nobody feels it harder than we do.

"Not qualifying for the knockout stages of Europe is a big disappointment for a club of our size and ambition but the cold reality is that we haven't played well enough when it has really counted – there is no getting away from that fact and we won't.

"There are some things we haven't

carried out as well as we would like in certain games but we are working as hard as we ever have. The simple fact is we lose games, like the every other side, but that doesn't make us a bad team or not capable of winning these games. We have a great squad, are second in the



I have really enjoyed the responsibility of leading the side. It hasn't always been in the easiest situations but that is what makes the very top players stand out. I am not there yet but learning all the time and relishing the duty.



Guinness Premiership and ready for the rest of the campaign that includes an EDF Energy Cup Semi-Final."

There will be no rest for the wicked this afternoon. Gloucester get back to business in the Guinness Premiership against the current leaders – London Irish.

Back in December, Toby Booth's side subjected Gloucester to all manner of discomfort – dismembering them in a bonus point victory at the Madejski Stadium that not only underlined Irish's title credentials but highlighted Gloucester's weaknesses.

The pain of that defeat still lingers and will be burning fiercely this afternoon.

"It was a game we never got in to," Narryway reflects. "We didn't kick particularly well and chased worse. They are a devastating side in broken

field and we gave them too many opportunities to exploit that talent.

"I don't think that was representative of what we are about as a side but it hit us hard. There were some angry people around the club following that defeat and the feeling is still fresh.

"To be honest, it's not something I want to forget in a hurry. I had never been on the back of 40-odd points before and it made me realise that appreciate the good times you have to experience and learn from the bad.

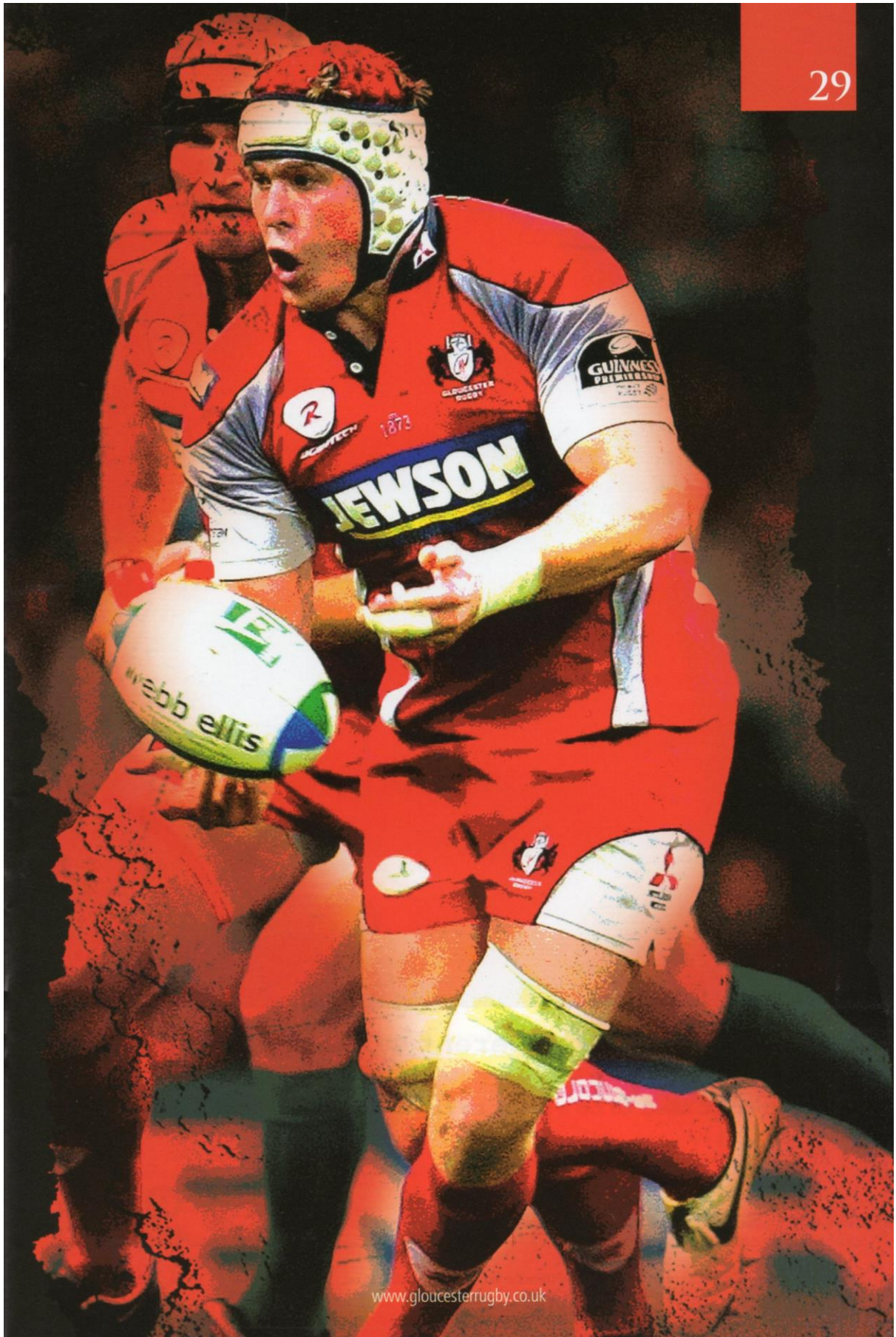
"We are doing that – we want London Irish to see what we are about today – no-one needs telling how significant this game is for us."

Narryway, famed for his athleticism, ball carrying qualities and intelligence at picking the most threatening running lines, has also taken on the captaincy duties in recent weeks.

"Dean [Ryan] has asked me to step up in leadership and influence terms," he said. "It may have been something I had not considered before but becoming an international and being exposed to top-quality players means you have to grow other areas of your game.

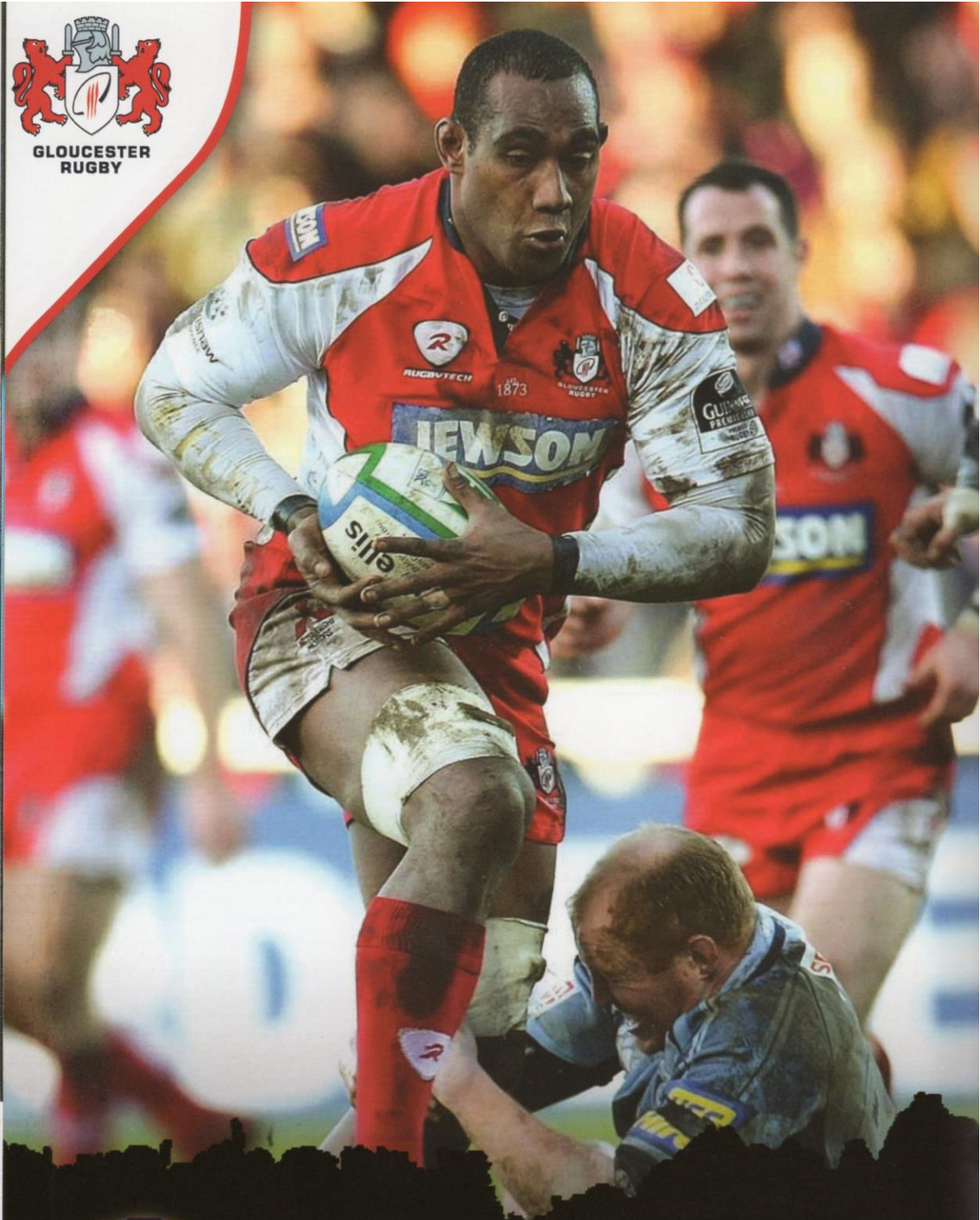
"I have really enjoyed the responsibility of leading the side. It hasn't always been in the easiest situations but that is what makes the very top players stand out. I am not there yet but learning all the time and relishing the duty.

"We appreciate we are not in great form but I am absolutely positive that with the amount of effort and determination we are putting in, things will turn round for us. There would be no better time than today to show people exactly what we can do."





GLoucester
RUGBY



APO SATALA

DOB: 14.08.78

Weight: 17st 2lb

Height: 6'4"

Position: Flanker



RYAN'S REVIEW



We are now out of the Heineken Cup following defeats against Cardiff and Biarritz.

DR: YES we are and to be honest we haven't played well enough in the competition to warrant a place in the knockout stages. To be a sustainable and durable success in that competition you need the majority of your top-end players available on a consistent basis and we haven't had that luxury. That is not an excuse, that is a fact of life and the sheer competitive nature of the Guinness Premiership means you don't get the luxury to pick and choose games to rest or rotate players.

We have also made too many mistakes in key periods of matches. We were right back in the contest at the Millennium Stadium but conceded 14 points in three minutes and ever since then we were playing catch up in the pool. If you lose at home in the group stages then qualification instantly

becomes an outside possibility.

In the last three weeks we have also played in some of the worst conditions I can ever remember and that has taken away vast elements of our game and narrowed what has been possible. It has highlighted we are not as proficient in some areas as we thought we were or wanted to be and that means we have got to work harder to get those areas right.



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Defeat in France last weekend confirmed the exit, what were your thoughts?

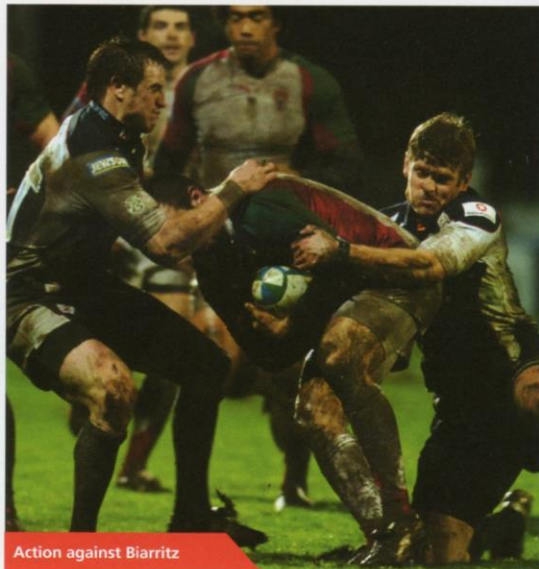
DR: YOU couldn't fault the work-rate or effort. We found ourselves behind early and that put us in a situation where we had to chase the game. To concede 17 points over the course of 40 or so minutes is sustainable in a game like that but to be that far behind, in those conditions so early put us immediately on the back foot.

I thought we coped okay after that and did some good things, got back into the game with a try and pressed pretty hard but couldn't get the second score that would have put them under real pressure. They coped with the kicking requirements better than us as the game moved through. Dimitri Yachvili was simple but smart in his execution, they always had four at the back to retrieve possession and we struggled to move them around like we needed to.

When we got people like Naz and Strokes over the advantage line we generated



Action against Cardiff Blues



Action against Biarritz



Alex Corbisiero of London Irish is congratulated by his team mates after scoring a try

some good possession but perhaps didn't use it as we might have done in better conditions. We just need to move through, regroup and learn from the experiences heading back into the Premiership.



Talking of which, London Irish are the current leaders of the Guinness Premiership and playing some good stuff at the moment.

DR: WHAT they are doing really well is being devastating from turn-over ball, as we found out at the Madejski Stadium before Christmas. Their foundations have long been established – their line-out operation is very competitive and they are physical at the

contact area. Add in that counter-attacking quality and it is easy to why they are doing so well this season.

Perhaps in seasons gone we would see the benefit of coming back into the Premiership from the Heineken Cup but I would say they have probably played in better conditions and have at least been able to get some pace into their game so the gap might not have been as wide as it could have been.

Toby Booth has done a great job but today is about ourselves, we are at home, second in the table and are craving a victory. We just have to focus on our game and not get too concerned with anything else that is going on.



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TODAY'S TEAMS

Saturday 31st January 2009 14.45
Gloucester Rugby v London Irish



GLoucester RUGBY

REPLACEMENTS:
 16 TITTERBELL
 17 WOOD
 18 BORTOLAMI
 19 HAZELL
 20 LEWIS
 21 WATKINS
 22 FOSTER

LONDON IRISH

REPLACEMENTS:
 16 SKUSE
 17 COETZEE
 18 JOHNSON
 19 THORPE
 20 BAILEY
 21 LALANNE
 22 THOMPSTONE

Guinness Premiership Table

Pos	Team	Pld	W	D	L	F	A	TF	TA	TB	LB	Pts
1	London Irish	12	8	0	4	300	176	35	15	3	4	39
2	Gloucester Rugby	12	8	0	4	268	222	28	24	4	1	37
3	Bath Rugby	11	7	1	3	272	227	31	22	2	3	35
4	Sale Sharks	11	8	0	3	184	144	15	9	1	1	34
5	Leicester Tigers	12	7	1	4	255	228	23	23	0	2	32
6	Saracens	12	6	0	6	280	223	24	17	2	4	30
7	Harlequins	11	5	1	5	256	233	28	21	2	3	27
8	Northampton Saints	12	5	1	6	233	254	21	24	0	1	23
9	London Wasps	11	4	0	7	200	242	14	25	0	4	20
10	Worcester Warriors	10	3	2	5	168	196	13	20	0	2	18
11	Newcastle Falcons	12	3	1	8	168	286	16	29	0	2	16
12	Bristol Rugby	12	1	1	10	146	299	13	32	0	3	9

Today's Officials

Referee: Dave Pearson
 Touch Judges: Stuart Terhegge & Paul Dix
 4th: TBA 23-21
 Replacement Ref:





PERSONAL FILES

with Gareth Delve

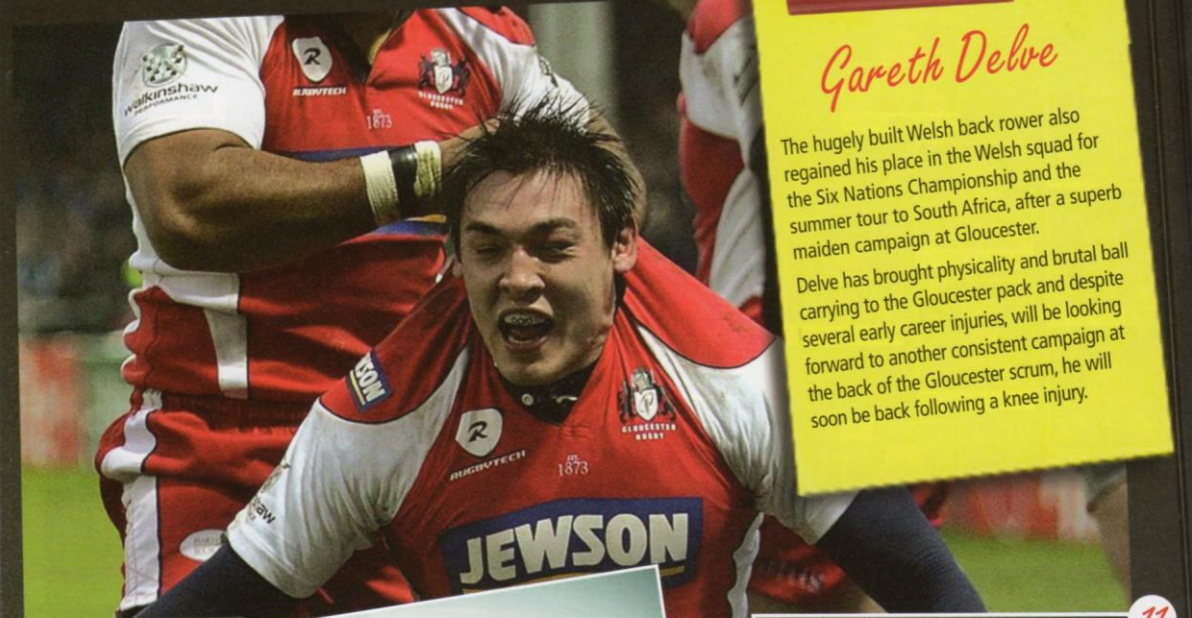
by Ian Randall



Gareth Delve

The hugely built Welsh back rower also regained his place in the Welsh squad for the Six Nations Championship and the summer tour to South Africa, after a superb maiden campaign at Gloucester.

Delve has brought physicality and brutal ball carrying to the Gloucester pack and despite several early career injuries, will be looking forward to another consistent campaign at the back of the Gloucester scrum, he will soon be back following a knee injury.



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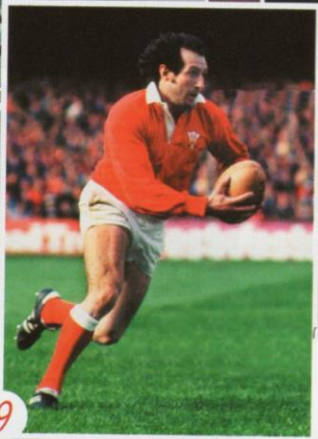


THE ROLLING STONES

6



9



10



1. What is the first match you remember watching?

The 1995 Five Nations. Wales beat France and I recall Scott Quinnell storming down the touchline with half the French team hanging off him.

2. Who is your sport's best pundit?

Bill McLaren's hard to beat. He was the voice of rugby for so many years - AND he's Rory Lawson's grandfather.

3. Can you explain cricket?

Two teams of eleven players, one team bats, one team bowls, two batsmen with stumps to defend and six balls in an over.

4. What's been your worst fashion crime?

It would go back to my days growing up in Cardiff. I had an orange Kappa tracksuit - I'm sure it was fashionable at the time...

5. Who's got the flashiest motor at the club?

I think there's been a changing of the guard. So far a lot of the guys have said Les and his Escalade but Mark Bitcon has just got a new Porsche Cayman. For a fitness coach he's not doing badly.

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

Probably Necker Island off Richard Branson. It's a nice Caribbean retreat.

7. Which charity do you support,

and why?

I'm involved with several cancer charities, so I support them and the RSPCA. I'm quite big on my animals.

8. What's your favourite biscuit?

Fig rolls. Tasty but fairly healthy.

9. Who is the most famous person with your Christian name?

As a Welsh rugby player I have to say Gareth Edwards. I'm pretty sure that's why I was called Gareth. It's a pretty common name in Wales now.

10. Can you play a musical instrument?

I had guitar lessons when I was younger but stupidly gave it up. I've just bought a pair of iPod mixing desks so hopefully I can play them soon.

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

Rolling Stones. I went to see them last year and the way Mick Jagger is still running round at 60 odd, I wouldn't mind that longevity.

12. How would you improve the play offs?

To be honest I'd scrap them. For me after 22 games the best team sits at the top of the Premiership, but they are there for a reason and if it generates interest then I suppose you have to continue with them.

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

There are a couple. "Delvey" for obvious reasons, and "Welsh Panda" from the physio's because I was

picking up a lot of black eyes last season.

14. What's your party trick?

I used to be a hell of a dancer before my knees went.

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

That's difficult because not many of the guys show their intellectual side day to day. I'd go for Olly Morgan, because he must have learned something at Millfield for all that money, and Olly Barkley, because I went to school with him and he was fairly bright back then.

16. Has your sport ever brought you to tears?

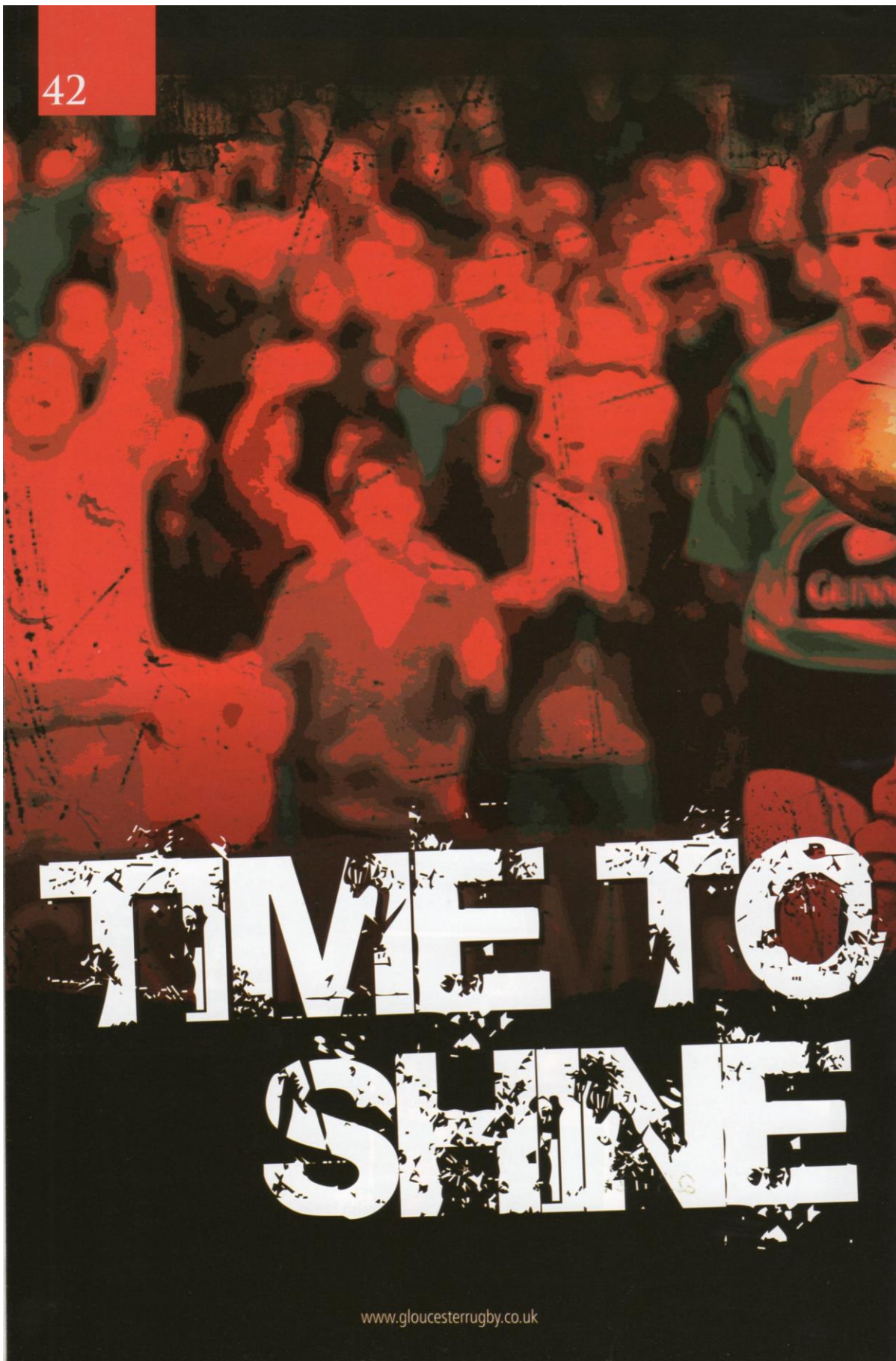
No, but fairly close, especially with all these injuries. I have been quite depressed at times. On the field one of the hardest things to take was the play-off semi final defeat to Leicester last year.

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

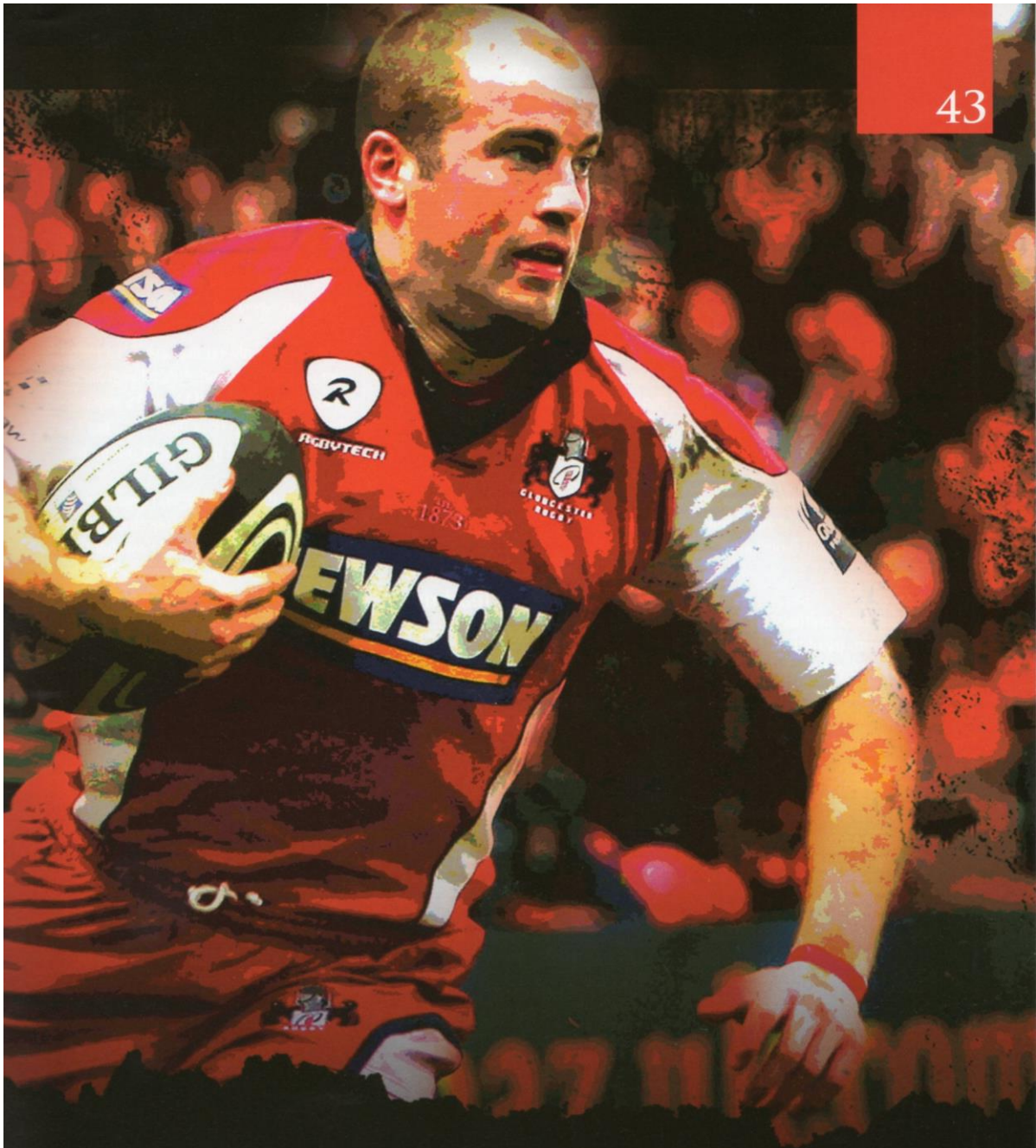
When guys miss overlaps. You get so caught up with taking the ball on you don't see the space. A lot of mistakes are made when you're actually trying too hard, running round like a headless chicken.


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

I'm the one person who is allowed to say Cardiff, because I was born and bred there, but I would put London in the mix too.



TIME TO SHINE



 He might have been out of action for three months but James Simpson-Daniel has returned to action and as Steve Cotton from the Western Daily Press reports, is desperate to make up for lost time

TIME TO SHINE



JAMES SIMPSON-DANIEL has had no time to ease his way back into the Gloucester side after

recovering from injury – but he would not want it any other way.

The England winger missed three months following ankle surgery in October, but has returned to play 80 minutes in each of his side's last two matches, the Heineken Cup defeats against Cardiff Blues and Biarritz.

And after getting back on the score sheet with his fourth try of the season in last Friday's 24-10 defeat in the south of France, Simpson-Daniel is desperate to help his side snap out of their losing streak as he rediscovers his form and fitness.

London Irish visit Kingsholm today for a second-versus-first Guinness Premiership fixture – and Simpson-Daniel is hoping for a strong display of character after a disappointing few weeks for Gloucester.

"The last few weeks have been pretty bad for us as a club on the whole – and now we've got to go into a big game this weekend after a lot of disruption," said the 26-year-old.

"But don't get me wrong, London Irish's preparations will have been disrupted as well. They will have guys missing, as do we, so it's no tail-between-our-legs jobs.

"Our confidence isn't as high as we would ideally want it to be going into this type of game, but it's important that we pull together now and really try to show a bit of character. We need to get back to winning ways.

"There are no alarm bells but getting beaten three games in a row isn't good for any side, especially a side that we like to think will challenge for things. If we

want to be competitive with the top sides, we need to get back to winning ways."

Challenging conditions – high winds at Newcastle, a heavy surface against Cardiff and wind and rain at Biarritz – have hardly helped matters over the course of the last three matches.



I have really enjoyed the responsibility of leading the side. It hasn't always been in the easiest situations but that is what makes the very top players stand out. I am not there yet but learning all the time and relishing the duty.



But Simpson-Daniel says there can be no excuses as Gloucester look to put things right against Irish this weekend.

"The conditions have played a very big part – but it has been the same for the opposition as well," he said. "It would be great if conditions were good this weekend, but we also need to prove some time that we can win when all the boxes aren't ticked. We need to prove we can claw a win from whatever situation."

Last weekend's "horrendous" delayed journey back from Biarritz did little to cheer Gloucester spirits, but the incentive of a top-of-the-table clash with an in-form Irish side has certainly focused the minds this week.

And Simpson-Daniel is looking forward to continuing his comeback from injury after

back-to-back 80-minute outings over the past two weekends.

"I'd almost rather it that way – I'd rather get playing," he said. "It's all well and good me thinking, "if I have 15 minutes here and half an hour there..." – but I am glad to have just got straight out there.

"I played the first game and I was sluggish as far as my fitness was concerned, but my actual ankle was great and I was happy to have got through 80 minutes. Then the other day in Biarritz, in another heavy game, I felt I took another step. I think my match fitness and personal game will come back the more I play.

"As far as the team is concerned, we are desperate to come good at the weekend."



DAVE KING'S WORLD OF RUGBY

Dave King delves through the archives to dig up another series of interesting facts in the matchday programme

MIKE TINDALL became the ninth captain of this club since the advent of professional rugby. Previous to Mike's appointment they have been: Dave Sims, Peter Glanville, Kingsley Jones, Ian Jones, Phil Vickery, Jake Boer, Marco Bortolami and Peter Buxton.

No fewer than 25 International players have captained this club they are: Harold Boughton, Bill Johns, Dai Gent, Arthur Hudson, George Holford, Sid Smart, Tom Voyce, Les Saxby, Tom Price, George Hastings, Peter Ford, Don Rutherford, Mike Burton, John Watkins, Steve Mills, Gordon Sergeant, John Orwin, Malcolm Preedy, Ian Smith, Dave Sims, Kingsley Jones, Ian Jones, Phil Vickery, Marco Bortolami and Mike Tindall.

There is an abundance of trophies available for matches between various countries. The latest is the Hillary Shield played for between England and New Zealand. This trophy follows in the wake of the Bledisloe Cup played for between Australia and New Zealand. The Calcutta Cup is contested for between England and Scotland. In 2007 it was decided to award the Guiseppe Garibaldi Trophy to the winners of the Six Nations tussle between France and Italy. Another new trophy is the Prince William Cup first played in 2007 between Wales and South Africa. In 2004 South Africa played for the Freedom Trophy against New Zealand for the first time. The Cook Cup is contested between Australia and England. This summer the Tom Richards Trophy will be played for between South Africa and the British Lions. The Millennium Trophy is at stake when England face Ireland. Finally the All Blacks and France contest the Gallaher Trophy. Silverware is not in short supply on the International scene.



Only Leicester have enjoyed a longer unbeaten sequence of home matches than we have at Kingsholm. Our unbeaten run of 34 matches which stretched from 28th September 2001 to 8th November 2003, was ended in a 20-15 defeat by west country rivals Bath. Leicester, remained unbeaten in their 41 matches. The run began on 22nd January 2000 and ended on the 18th May 2002, when Bristol brought to a halt to that sequence by being victorious in a 27-13 encounter.

Tom Smith, the long serving Northampton Saints and Scotland prop, who is the Premiership's oldest player at 37 years of age has been appointed forwards coach to Scotland Under 20;s squad. Tom, is also celebrating his testimonial year.

There have been no fewer than 94 players who have represented this club in the



Heineken Cup. Our leading point's scorer in this competition is Henry Paul with a total of 168; Henry is currently with Leeds in National League One. Next in line is Ryan Lamb with 139 points, Ludovic Mercier with 101 points while Simon Mannix scored 95 points. James Simpson-Daniel is our leading try scorer in the Heineken Cup with 16 tries.

Andy Keast, one of our former coaches when Philippe Saint-Andre was in charge here at Kingsholm is now living in Umhlanga in Durban, South Africa. Andy is still involved in rugby union as a coach with Durban Harlequins. Before he moved to South Africa in 2008 he had coached Harlequins, London Irish, Gloucester and Worcester. Along with his wife Stephanie, they both work for the Soul of Africa charity which helps Aids orphans. This summer's visit of the British Lions tour to South Africa will bring memories flooding back for Andy; in 1997 he was one of the supporting staff, as the team's technical analyst that brought the British Lions success. Ironical that South Africa won the World Cup in 1995 and then hosted the



Lions tour two years later. Having won the World Cup in 2007 will history repeat itself once again two years later?

When Delon Armitage, who was born on Pepper Island, made his debut for England, against the Pacific Island last autumn, he became the first native Tongan-born player to earn an England cap last February.

There is certainly a cosmopolitan look to French rugby this season. There are 207 foreigners from 22 countries at the Top 14 clubs and there are 165 in the second division – Pro D2. The lack of a salary cap in the Top 14 allows their clubs to buy the best and South Africa is the biggest provider of foreign players in the French championship. Brive have four English players in Andy Goode, Alex Popham, Steve Thompson and Ben Cohen, Magnus Lund late of Sale Sharks is at Biarritz.

Since the turn of the millennium our attendances here at Kingsholm have grown over the years. In 1999-2000 we averaged 6,820. In 2000-01 we averaged 6,754. The following season of 2001-02 saw an increase to 9,397. In 2002-03 the average was 10,545 and since that

season of Powergen Cup success we have averaged 2003-04 - 10,726, 2004-05 - 12,427, 2005-06 - 11,575, 2006-07 - 12,183 and 2007-08 - 14,056.

There is a move to enable two Italian clubs to play in the Celtic League. They would also fill Italy's two European Cup slots. Two new teams could be created, controlled and funded by the Federation Italiana di Rugby. This is a move backed by our own Marco Bortolami who believes players need to be in a higher competition enabling players to be under more pressure.





PETER ARNOLD

It's been a tough few weeks but Peter Arnold's faith remains strong. He is hoping for a positive result against current Guinness Premiership leaders London Irish this afternoon.

RAINY DAYS

IT USED to be said that banks are places where they'll lend you an umbrella when the sun is shining. We have a parallel to that right here. It's easy to support Gloucester – or any other team for that matter - when all is going well, but more difficult when the wheels come off and things go against you. In my view, the measure of a group of supporters is how they bear up in hard times, and the blokes on the field really need the fans to get behind them.

That was never more true than right now. Let's face it, we should have beaten Cardiff. To let them off the hook when they were playing with 14 men for most of the match, and faced a six-point deficit in the final quarter, is something which simply shouldn't have happened, but it did and we all have to live with it.

We don't have to like it, but we do have to play our part in helping the lads bounce back, which they are more than capable of doing. I suppose it's our privilege to demand the heads of anyone, from the Director of Rugby down to the lady who washes the shirts and the chap who collects the glasses in the bar, if we deem those worthies responsible for recent reverses, but having got that out of our collective system, it's our job to start shouting our heads off (on the ground or in print) to help things get back on track.

Perpetual moaning doesn't do anyone any good. As Professor Moriarty said to

Sherlock Holmes, "It won't do. It really won't do!"

SHADES OF SUNBURY

LONDON Irish took us apart the last time we met them, so there are some points to prove today. Nevertheless, I always like to encounter the Exiles, if only for reasons of pure nostalgia.

I've no doubt that facilities at the Madejski Stadium are first class, although I haven't often seen the place more than half full when watching on the telly. I'm afraid that, for some of us, the all bells and whistles attractions of the Reading venue will never compete with the old Irish home at Sunbury in terms of atmosphere and the feeling that one is enjoying a real rugby occasion.

London Irish supporters were always some of the friendliest around, which isn't surprising considering their Hibernian heritage. That amiability was echoed, perhaps exemplified, by the bar facilities. There was the only bar I remember where you could sit and watch the whole match without going out into the cold, because it was situated over the top of the grandstand, with a long window stretching the whole length of it.

Mind you, the view could get a bit hazy by the time all was done and dusted, not because the window steamed up, but because one's eyeballs did. You see, drinks kept flowing the whole time, such was the hospitality of the locals. Of course, in honour bound, one had to drink the Guinness, which as I recall was imported from Dublin rather than a product of the Park Royal brewery in West London.

The results of the games almost became irrelevant. Almost, but not quite. Sometimes, I wish everything wasn't quite



London Irish fans



Dean Ryan



Jack Adams

so important, these days.

FRENCH LEAVE

AS I write, the players are struggling to get home, having been trapped in south west France by the worst weather the region has seen in over a decade. It's no way to start preparation for a game against a formidable side who are currently leading the Premiership table.

It makes me wonder what else can go wrong. Illness, injury, inferior pitches, mystifying refereeing... We seem to be suffering from just about all the ills a rugby team is heir to, at the moment.

Am I alone in being rather pleased that what the press calls 'our European dream' is over? Just between you and I, I have trouble in treating the Heineken Cup with the seriousness it deserves. I'm fully aware of the issues of financial gain and prestige involved with the European adventure, and I would be as happy as anyone if we were ever to win the thing. Nevertheless, for me, and I suspect a great many other supporters, regard the Heineken as something of a side issue, and that the



At least some of our injured warriors are about to return, and the other good thing about the situation is that we may be compelled to give some young, fringe, players a chance to shine. We already have evidence of how successful that can be in the emergence of Dave Lewis, which has been highly gratifying to say the least.



real core of the season is the Premiership programme.

And that is about to be disrupted yet again. Any minute now we, along with a few other sides, are going to be decimated by the Six Nations. We could lose around eight or nine players during the tournament, which distorts everything more than somewhat.

At least some of our injured warriors are about to return, and the other good thing about the situation is that we may be compelled to give some young, fringe, players a chance to shine. We already have evidence of how successful that can be in the emergence of Dave Lewis, which has been highly gratifying to say the least.

Personally, I wouldn't mind seeing the likes of Adams, Sharples, Norton and Trinder et al given a chance to spread their wings. If we lose games with youngsters bolstering the side then so be it. There's no shame in that, and some of them are bound to surprise everyone.

We're in for a hard few weeks, but let's give it a go.

GLOUCESTER RUGBY
CARDIFF BLUES

12
16



Gloucester get the blues

Sunday, January 23

Referee: A. Lewis (Ire), Attendance: 14,912



THE NAME Bradley Davies is well known in Gloucester but this defeat had nothing to do with the former Kingsholm stand-off.

Cardiff's replacement lock scored the decisive try five minutes from time in an absorbing contest that effectively knocked Gloucester out of the competition – despite the fact they enjoyed a man advantage for almost an hour.

Winger Tom James was dismissed for a head-butt on Olivier Azam but in poor conditions, Gloucester failed to adapt their kicking game in the second half to build field position and territory that would have put Cardiff under pressure.

As the game grew, Cardiff's ability to dominate physically through the likes of Andy Powell, Martyn Williams, Maama Molitika and Gethin Jenkins was telling and eventually they ate into Gloucester's advantage to secure one of the most famous away results in Heineken Cup history.

Gloucester's best moments came in the first quarter. The returning James Simpson-Daniel almost created a try for Willie Walker, Iain Balshaw had a couple of good carries and the hosts generally dominated without getting the score their possession

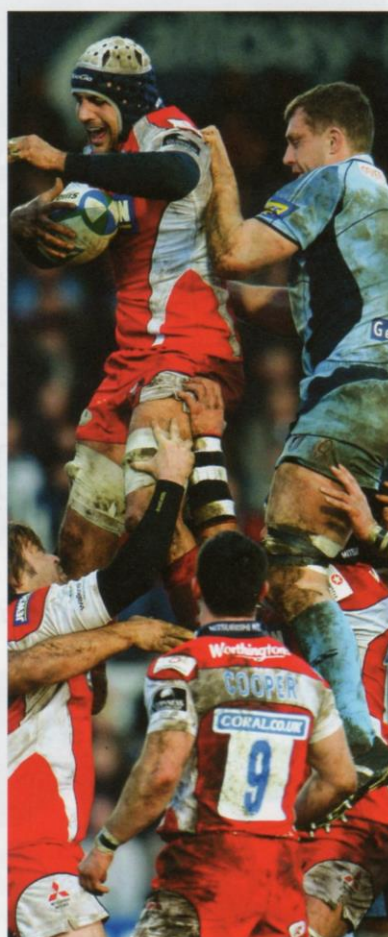
so badly needed.

Olly Barkley booted them in front with a penalty and although Leigh Halfpenny drew the sides level, Barkley was on target twice more before the interval to leave Gloucester handily placed 9-3 ahead.

Halfpenny made it 9-6 immediately after the re-start and then Gloucester put together a withering series of phases but couldn't find the killer pass and when Halfpenny swept up Ryan Lamb's little kick, Cardiff bounced off the ropes immediately.

The Blues almost got in front when Powell crashed up from a line-out and both Matthew Watkins and Alex Brown had to scramble to deny a score for Gareth Williams. That could have been the defining moment because Barkley made it 12-6 with his fourth penalty.

However, Cardiff introduced Xavier Rush and it changed the course of the contest. His first carry yielded a penalty and then, with time ebbing away, Davies plunged over to score from short range. Halfpenny converted and the Blues held out for the remaining moments to shatter Gloucester hearts.



Coach's Comment



"It is tremendously disappointing – it has happened before to us and that makes it even worse," head coach Dean Ryan



Timeline

7 mins	
Barkley pen	3-0
17 mins	
Halfpenny pen	3-3
22 mins	
Barkley pen	6-3
32 mins	
Barkley pen	9-3
42 mins	
Halfpenny pen	9-6
61 mins	
Barkley pen	12-6
71 mins	
Halfpenny pen	12-9
76 mins	
Davies try, Halfpenny con	12-16

Gloucester Line-up

15	Willie Walker	
14	Iain Balshaw	
13	Matthew Watkins	
12	Olly Barkley	4p
11	James Simpson-Daniel	
10	Ryan Lamb	
9	Gareth Cooper	
1	Alasdair Dickinson	
2	Olivier Azam	
3	Carlos Nieto	
4	Marco Bortolami	
5	Alex Brown	
6	Alasdair Strokosch	
7	Apolosi Satala	
8	Luke Narraway	(capt)
REPS		
16	Andy Titterrell	(Azam)
17	Nick Wood	(Dickinson)
18	Will James	(Bortolami)
19	Adam Eustace	
20	Dave Lewis	(Cooper)
21	Anthony Allen	(Watkins)
22	Mark Foster	

BIARRITZ
GLOUCESTER RUGBY

24
10



Yachvili returns to haunt Gloucester

Friday, January 23, Attendance 5,000

Referee: Nigel Owens (Wal)

Photos: Mikal Ludlow, citizen



FORMER Gloucester scrum-half Dimitri Yachvili produced a man of the match performance

against his former club to deny them any hope of qualification in the Heineken Cup.

The scrum-half scored a first-half try and then produced an outstandingly accurate kicking game to pilot his side to a deserved victory in terrible conditions in France last Friday.

Gloucester went into the game with a slim chance of qualification - indeed they required a win at the very least and possibly four tries - but although they worked as hard as possible, particularly up front, they came second best.

What they needed was a solid start but they didn't get it. Biarritz nabbed a line-out throw close to the Gloucester line and when the hosts drove forward, number eight Imanol Harinordoquy squeezed his way over to open for the first try.

Yachvili's conversion made it 10-0 following a second minute penalty and when Apo Satala coughed up the ball to concede a scrum, Harinordoquy combined with Yachvili and he kicked through on the sodden ground, chased down his kick and slid home to score.



Gloucester could have been dead and buried at this stage, 17-0 down. But they rallied with a cracking try of their own. Olly Morgan came in to sweep up from a scrum, Willie Walker shifted play to the left and Matthew Watkins straightened the attack brilliantly before Olly Barkley sent James Simpson-Daniel skipping his way to the whitewash.

With the likes of Luke Narraway, Alex Brown, Will James and the rest getting knee deep in the action, the turning point of the game came just before the break. Narraway stepped and broke before finding Iain Balshaw.

The winger chipped past Damien Traille but the Biarritz man stuck out a leg and Balshaw ended in the dirt. It prevented a glorious try-scoring opportunity and a score then may well have turned the contest.

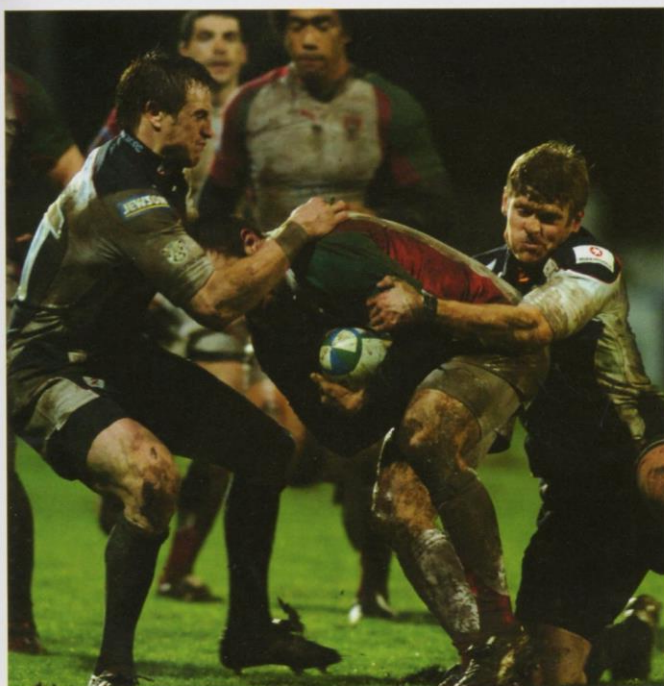
As it was, Traille went to the sinbin and Biarritz escaped any further punishment. And they made the game safe 10 minutes into the second half when Julien Peyrelongue charged down Walker's clearance and pounced to score.

Gloucester battled on but couldn't find a way through to suffer their third pool defeat this season.

Man of the Match



Luke Narraway - the skipper worked his fingers to the bone for the cause



Timeline

2 mins	
Yachvili pen	3-0
7 mins	
Harinordoquy try, Yachvili con	10-0
15 mins	
Yachvili try and con	17-0
18 mins	
Simpson-Daniel try, Barkley con	17-7
25 mins	
Barkley pen	17-10
48 mins	
Peyrelongue try, Yachvili con	24-10

Gloucester Line-up

15	Olly Morgan	
14	Iain Balshaw	
13	Matthew Watkins	
12	Olly Barkley	(1c, 1p)
11	James Simpson-Daniel	(1t)
10	Willie Walker	
9	Gareth Cooper	
1	Alasdair Dickinson	
2	Olivier Azam	
3	Carlos Nieto	
4	Will James	
5	Alex Brown	
6	Alasdair Strokosch	
7	Apo Satala	
8	Luke Narraway	
REPS		
16	Scott Lawson	(James)
17	Nick Wood	(Dickinson)
18	Adam Eustace	(Brown)
19	Andy Titterrell	(Azam)
20	Rory Lawson	(Cooper)
21	Anthony Allen	(Walker)
22	Jack Forster	