

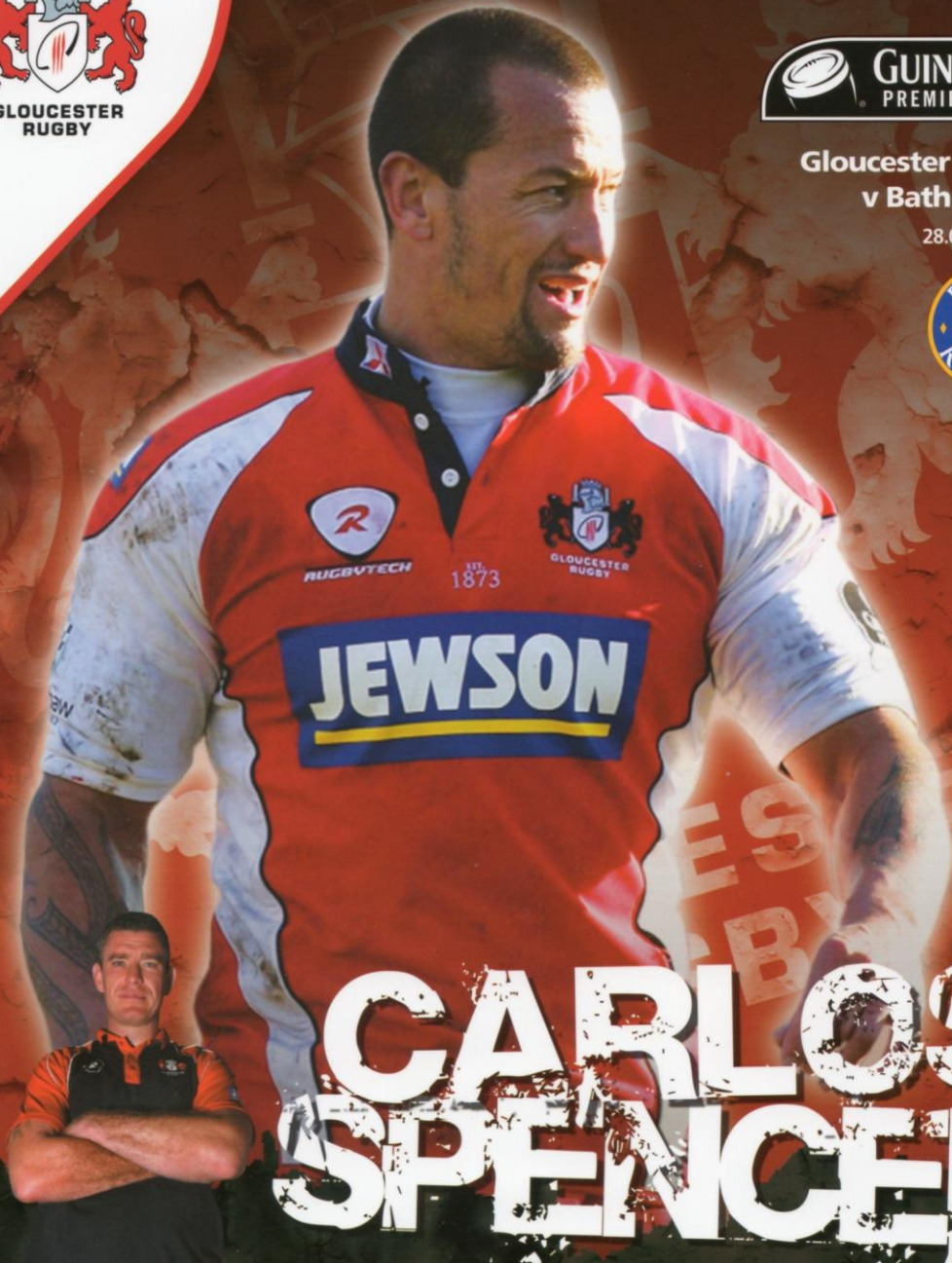


OFFICIAL MATCHDAY PROGRAMME OF GLOUCESTER RUGBY 2008/2009 ISSUE 14 • £3.00



Gloucester Rugby
v Bath Rugby

28.02.09 15.00



CARLOS SPENCER

DEAN RYAN

On defeat at Quins

SIMPSON-DANIEL

Looks ahead to the Ospreys

REMEMBER WHEN?

Steve Cotton on a glorious day at Kingsholm

GOOD NEIGHBOURS?

David Barnes on living next to Olly Barkley

PLUS: Fans Zone, Peter Arnold, ticket and community news



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CAPTAIN'S CORNER



THIS IS one of those weeks in the continual cycle of Gloucester Rugby that always feels a little bit different, that carries with it that little extra history, significance and expectation.

It is not just because Gloucester and Bath are not many miles apart - they could be on the other side of the world and the feeling would be the same - but when these two teams meet it is something players relish, rise to and demand that little bit extra for.

The game at Kingsholm last season was arguably the best in the Guinness Premiership and had on offer everything that makes this league so special. It is hard to recall anything more physical, more demanding and with a higher example of skill than the very last game of the season.



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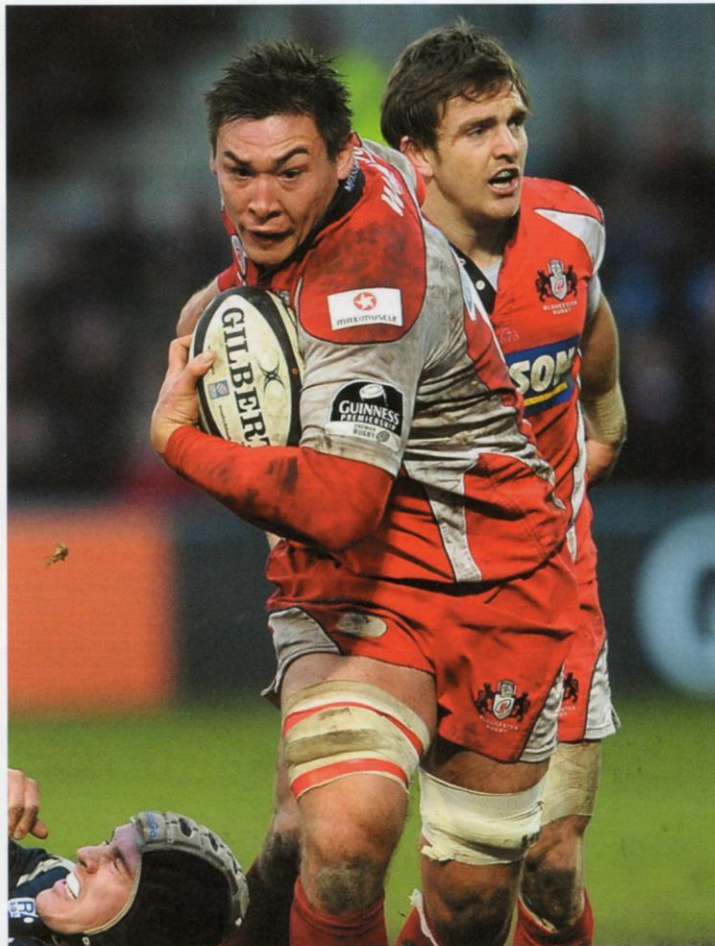
This season, both teams have enjoyed their moments and we recognise Bath's continual improvement into genuine title challengers. They are an exceptional side who have made a habit of winning games late this season.

We come into today's game following our narrow defeat against Harlequins last weekend but that should not de-rail our momentum.

We could easily have won but perhaps more importantly we produced a level of performance in key areas we can really build on - not just now but towards the rest of the season. If anything, events at The Stoop will motivate us even more today.

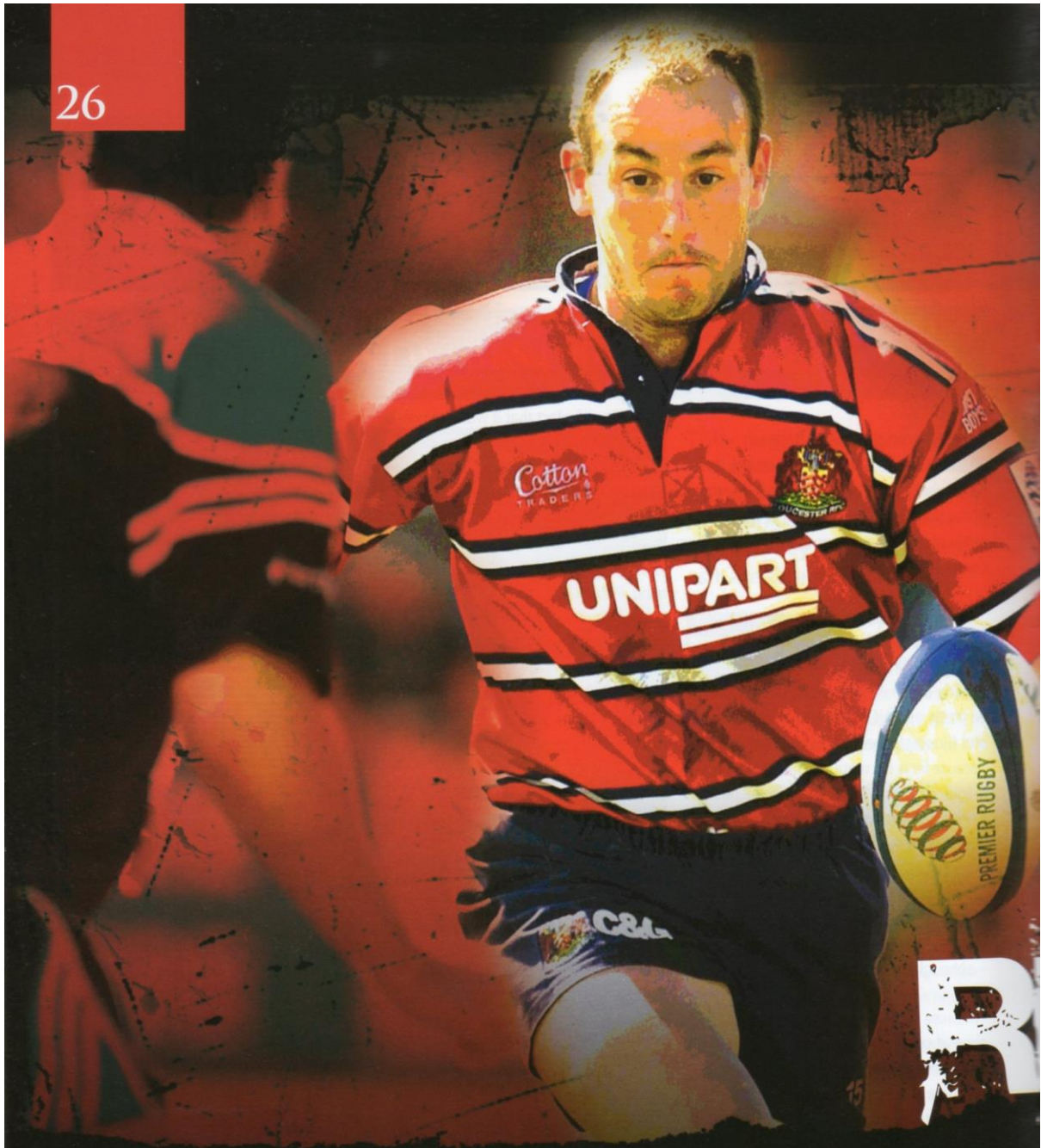
This afternoon is a very special one to everyone associated with the club. The build-up has crackled with anticipation, the stadium will be at capacity and the atmosphere the best of the season.


I don't really need to ask but please get right behind the players this afternoon. From the moment we warm up until the final whistle, your fanatical level of support may just be the difference between two very good teams.

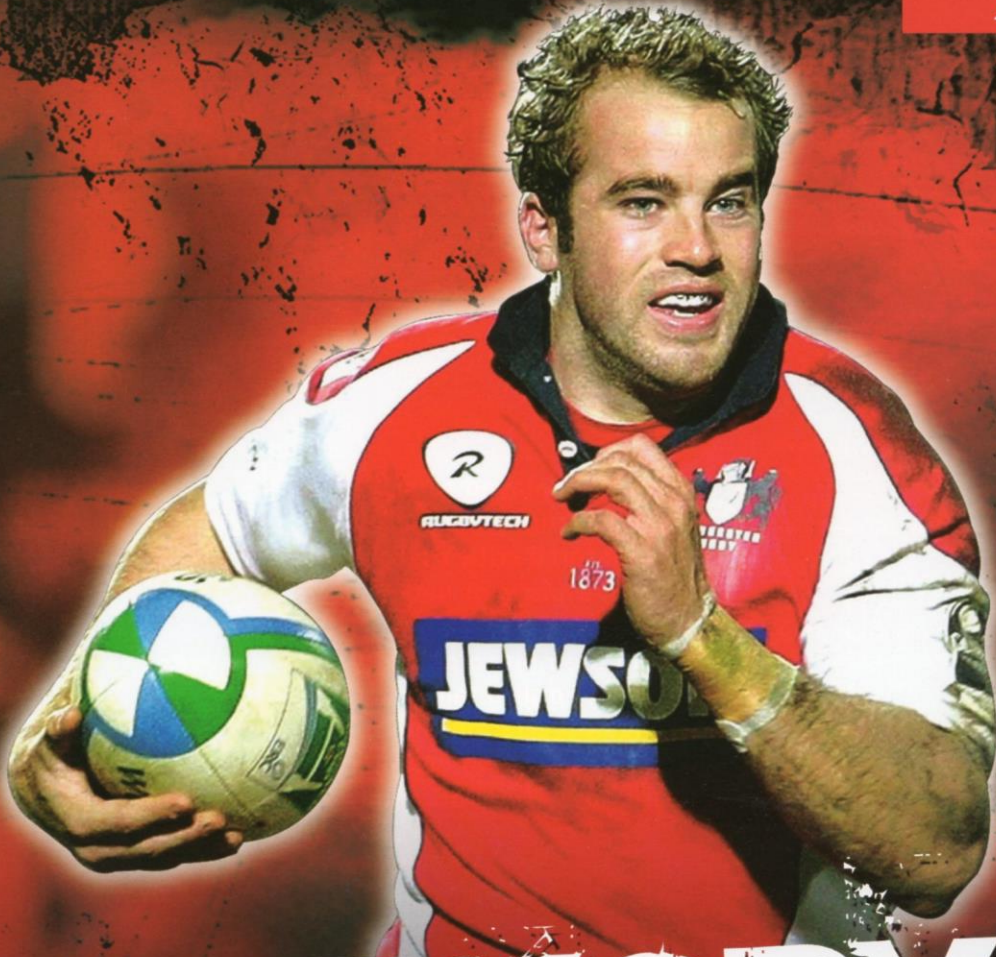


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 As a 20-year-old, Steve Cotton of the Western Daily Press saw Gloucester blitz Bath all over Kingsholm. Today he will be back, predicting a far closer but equally exhilarating afternoon.



REAL RUGBY, REAL RIVALRY

REAL RUGBY, REAL RIVALRY



A FORTNIGHT before I joined the Western Daily Press, Gloucester hosted Bath in the then Zurich Premiership and, with a free Saturday, I naturally decided to swat up on two of the three clubs I would be covering by visiting Kingsholm.

The date was May 4, 2002; the weather (and I am certain time has not distorted the reality) was beautiful and the stage was set for an entertaining match between two fierce rivals.

The outcome was somewhat different. While it was no doubt a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon for those clad in cherry and white, there was not much of a contest to be had on the pitch.

If there had been any neutrals inside Kingsholm that day – aside from those in the press box, of course – then, with the exception of Gloucester's dazzling all-round play, they would have had little to keep them interested. There wasn't a match as such, but a complete mismatch.

A young winger called James Simpson-Daniel, a few weeks short of his 20th birthday, helped himself to a hat-trick as Gloucester triumphed 68-12. Had the BBC's vidprinter covered rugby in the way it does football, the Gloucester score that day would have been accompanied by brackets and the word "sixty-eight" spelt out to avoid any suspicions of a mistype.

"I hope you are taking this in," one soon-to-be colleague from a national title told me as the home side's score passed 50. "You'll never see anything like this between these two again."

It was hardly the boldest of predictions, yet it has turned out to be true. Nothing in nearly seven years since has come close to being as one-sided as that mismatch.

But the Gloucester and Bath of 2002 were

very different to the Gloucester and Bath of 2009. Back then, Bath – for so long used to being the top dogs of English rugby (a fact which was certainly not lost on the Gloucester faithful that sun-drenched afternoon) – were approaching crisis point and in desperate need of major surgery.



Both have played some stunning rugby yet encountered criticism for certain aspects of their performance, and both are doing their bit to develop exciting English talent while appreciating the importance of importing star quality from abroad.



True, they were not helped by the absence of a raft of stars including Mike Catt, Matt Perry, Kevin Maggs and future Kingsholm favourites Iain Balshaw and Mike Tindall, but the gulf between the clubs all season had been startling.

Gloucester, who had grown tired of living in their neighbours' shadow during the 1980s and 1990s, were heading very definitely in the right direction with a team of talented Englishmen (Trevor Woodman, Phil Vickery, James Forrester, Andy Gomarsall and Simpson-Daniel, for example) supplemented by genuine class from overseas (including Olivier Azam, Patrice Collazo, Ludovic Mercier, Terry Fanolua and Robert Todd).

Now, as we enter the final few months of this season, both clubs are very much alive and kicking in the Guinness Premiership title race and both have genuine aspirations of winning a cup; Gloucester the EDF Energy Cup, Bath the Heineken.

And it could be argued that Gloucester and Bath have never been as evenly matched as they are right now.

Gloucester have gained 46 Premiership points from 15 matches; Bath have taken 42 from 13.

Both have played some stunning rugby yet encountered criticism for certain aspects of their performance, and both are doing their bit to develop exciting English talent while appreciating the importance of importing star quality from abroad.

Unlike my misguided 20-year-old self of 2002, eager to believe that historical rivalry alone would guarantee some kind of classic encounter regardless of the obvious gulf in playing ability, I can see genuine potential for a thriller today.

After the cut-and-thrust of last May's final regular season match, won 8-6 by Gloucester, and the 2005 Powergen Cup semi-final, when Bath secured victory thanks to Andy Williams' try in the final minute of extra-time, today there is another opportunity for a closely-fought match of genuine intrigue and drama.

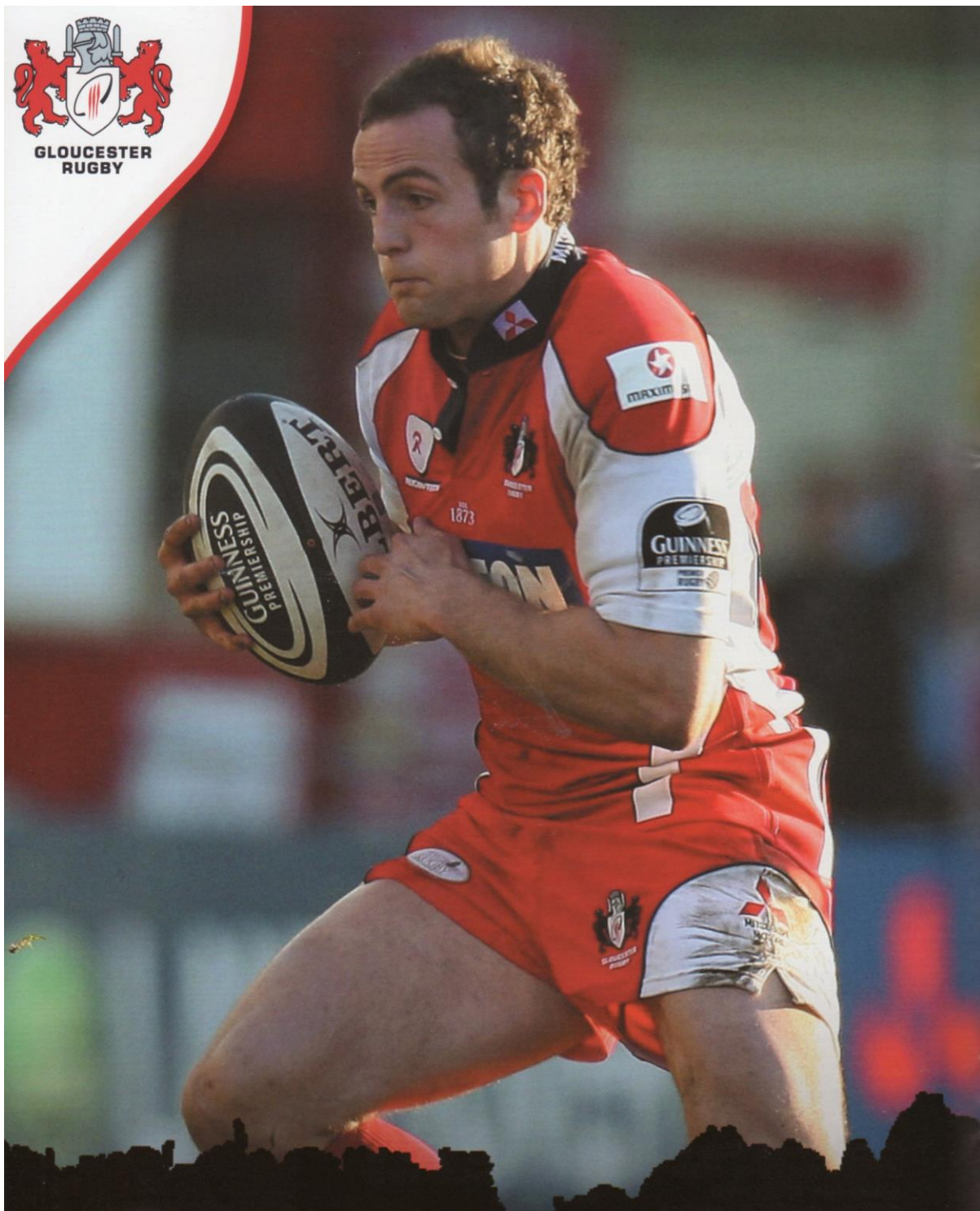
The players certainly appreciate the significance of today's fixture. Even those brought in from abroad, such as Bath's intelligent, free-scoring winger Joe Maddock, understand what Gloucester versus Bath is all about.

"Gloucester-Bath games are always fun to play in. It's a great rivalry that goes back decades and all our boys will be up for it on Saturday," he said. "We want to go and get a bit of revenge after they finally got a win at the Rec earlier in the season. We're desperate to go there and get one back now."

Even if they do not manage that, you can safely assume the margin between the sides will be somewhat smaller than 56 points.

This rivalry has never been stronger or more relevant.





CHARLIE SHARPLES

DOB: 17.08.89

Weight: 14st 8lb

Height: 6'0"

Position: Wing/Full Back



RYAN'S REVIEW



Even in defeat last weekend there is a sense momentum is gathering, would you agree?

DR: MOMENTUM is a word you could use, belief could be another. I thought defensively we were outstanding last weekend despite the fact Harlequins scored two tries. Our work-rate was exceptional; we were organised, physical and disciplined.

With guys returning from injury we have been able to strengthen and shift things around, particularly in the back five of the scrum with the return of Gareth Delve and Andy Hazell.

We have always been pretty confident we can be a threat because of our attacking



Our record shows we are consistent, if not the most consistent, side in the Premiership over a long period of time. Of course we lose matches and we have lost some high profile ones but that is a different thing entirely and something we believe we have taken steps to rectify over the last few weeks.



instinct - we want this side to be based around movement - but we also recognise

we needed to be better at other elements such as our kicking game and the last three or four weeks have shown we are capable of that.



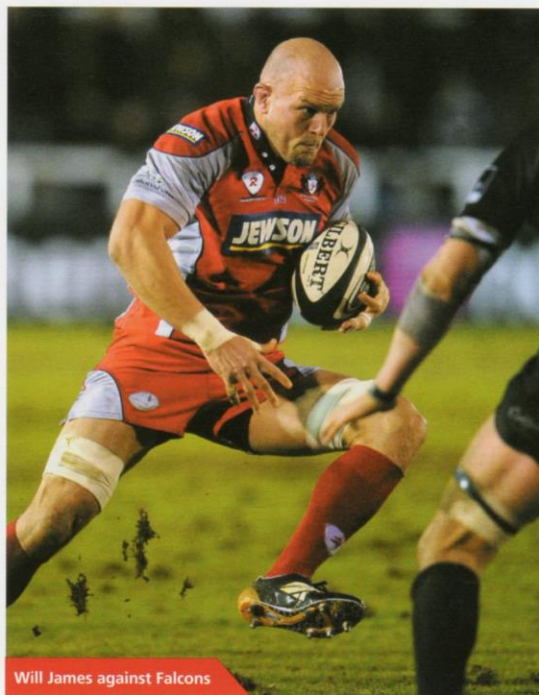
There have been claims we are not consistent, what would you say to that?

DR: I WOULD say it is the exact opposite of that. We are top of the Guinness Premiership in a season that is arguably the closest ever, we have won more games than anyone else and are in good shape for a play-off place.

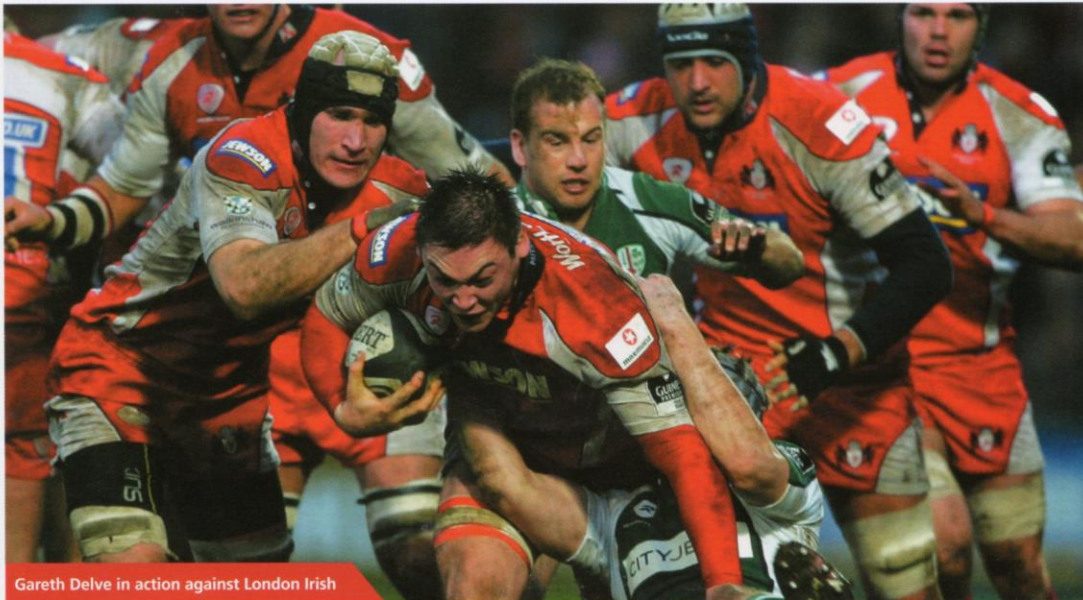
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Andy Hazell against Harlequins



Will James against Falcons



Gareth Delve in action against London Irish

different thing entirely and something we believe we have taken steps to rectify over the last few weeks.



Have the two recovery victories over London Irish and Sale Sharks been good for confidence?

DR: UNDOUBTEDLY. I said immediately after the Sale game to the media we have shown a massive amount of courage to win those two games in the way we did. I do not doubt that inside the group we have they are capable of winning games like that, it's just that we have not had the personnel in place to achieve it because of the injuries.

I think it was more a case of showing people externally we had that in us. Both Irish and Sale are currently in the top four and we won both games and won them well. I am not sure if confidence is the right word but it was confirmation we

believe we are heading in the right way, we have a great bunch of players who have worked extremely hard and are desperate for success.



Today we welcome Bath to Kingsholm, they have been in superb form this season?

DR: BATH are an outstanding side and have been for a year or two. They have made a habit of winning games late this season, are in the knockout stages of the Heineken Cup so their qualities are obvious.

I thought the game at Kingsholm last year was the game of the season. It was massively physical but the skill level from both teams was breath-taking. These games are usually too close to call because of everything associated and wrapped up with them.

Without question, we have done some

good things in the last three or four games and we just want to get those fundamentals right again today because it is a game that means so much to everyone involved with it.

“

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”

TODAY'S TEAMS

Saturday 28th February 2009 15.00
 Gloucester Rugby v Bath Rugby



GLoucester RUGBY

BATH RUGBY

REPLACEMENTS

16: TITTERRELL
 17: FORSTER
 18: WRIGHT
 19: WILLIAMS
 20: COOPER
 21: LAMB
 22: BARKLEY

REPLACEMENTS

16: HAWKINS
 17: JARVIS
 18: SHORT
 19: SCAYSBROOK
 20: BEMAND
 21: BERNE
 22: CUTHBERT

Guinness Premiership Table

Pos	Team	Pld	W	D	L	F	A	TF	TA	TB	LB	Pts
1	Gloucester Rugby	15	10	0	5	324	274	31	30	4	2	46
2	Sale Sharks	14	10	0	4	270	201	25	14	3	2	45
3	London Irish	15	8	1	6	350	233	40	20	3	5	43
4	Bath Rugby	15	8	2	5	252	264	38	27	3	3	42
5	Harlequins	14	8	1	5	311	257	34	21	2	3	39
6	Leicester Tigers	14	8	1	5	322	269	32	27	2	3	39
7	Saracens	14	6	0	8	304	256	24	19	2	6	32
8	London Wasps	13	6	0	7	245	276	17	30	0	4	28
9	Northampton Saints	15	6	1	8	264	305	23	27	0	2	28
10	Newcastle Falcons	14	5	1	8	216	298	21	29	1	2	25
11	Worcester Warriors	13	3	2	8	210	305	18	33	0	2	18
12	Bristol Rugby	14	1	1	12	162	366	14	40	0	3	9

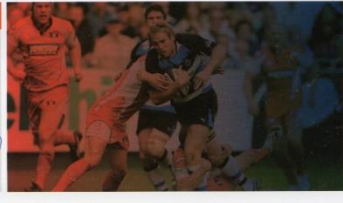
Today's Officials

Referee: Wayne Barnes

Touch Judges: Andrew Pearce & Martin Buck

4th: Mark Tovey

Replacement Ref: Roy Maybank





PERSONAL FILES

with **Olly Morgan**

by Ian Randall



Andy Hazell

The longest serving player in the current squad; Hazell is a huge hitting openside flanker with years of top-flight Premiership experience.

After making his debut in 1997, he began to cement his place at openside flanker and without numerous injuries in 2002-03 & 2003-04 seasons he would have continued to heighten his claims for international honors.

He combines raw pace and instinct on the ground to make him one of the most difficult players to play against.

Despite being the No7 at Gloucester since he began, Hazell has found an equally impressive rival in Fijian Akapusi Qera, and has shared the openside position with him during the 2007-08 season.

5



8



9



10

1. What is the first match you remember watching?

I can remember watching England, that's how it started. I used to play football - not very well - and I didn't start playing rugby until I went to secondary school, but my gramp used to bring me down to Kingsholm to try and get me into it if you like. I used to come down quite a bit then, but I was never really an avid watcher of it really until I started playing it, then I started taking an interest in it.

2. Who is your sport's best pundit?

I don't actually mind Stuart Barnes, I really don't. I know a lot of people don't like him and every time he comes to Kingsholm he gets a bit of abuse, but I actually don't mind him. Same as Will Greenwood, to be fair - he says what he actually thinks.

3. Can you explain cricket?

Not really, I think I've played Cricket two or three times, don't watch it on the TV, it's not really a sport I'm interested in, I never have been.

4. What's been your worst fashion crime?

When I went to Canada a few years back with the England team, we stayed in quite a fashionable part and I ended up buying a velour tracksuit which I wore once and I've never worn again. It's stayed in the wardrobe and I've never worn it in the UK. Me and Phil Greening bought them, wore them back into the hotel and everyone laughed, so I've never worn it since.

5. Who has the flashiest motor at the club?

Alex Brown did have a nice Porsche, but he's just traded it in now for an X5, so he's probably taken a massive loss on that which he can obviously afford to take, so I'd say him because he's had two flash motors in the space of six months.

6. If money was no object, what would

be the first thing you would buy?

I think I'd go and buy a piece of land and build my own property.

7. Which charity do you support?

Winstone's Wish and breast cancer. I think Winstone's Wish speaks for itself and since I've had children it's a charity you look to, before I wouldn't have looked at that. Obviously breast cancer because cancer affects virtually everyone of us.

8. What's your favourite biscuit?

There's actually a good story - whenever the boys come round my house for a cup of tea they moan I've got no biscuits. All I've got is things like organic oat cakes, I gave one to Iain Balshaw and he spat it back out! He said "I'm not eating that, it tastes like cardboard!" I think they're quite nice but the boys aren't very happy with them.

9. Can you play a musical instrument?

No, I'm pretty good on a set of turntables, but that's not a musical instrument. I've always messed around on decks and stuff, I've worked in a disco shop so I'm quite good at mixing and stuff like that.

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

I suppose it would have to be a rock band, something like U2 - everyone loves them across the generations and they make pretty cool music.

11. How would you improve the play offs?

Yeah, scrap them! We all know it builds up to a big game and it's never going to change but I think it's nice that if you win something over 20 odd games with a squad of 30 you've got something to work towards every week so it's not just the 22 on the day who win the title, it's the whole squad over a year.

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

My nick name's the squirrel, a couple of years ago we went out to a pub drinking and I was drinking with Alex Brown who can drink quite a lot and the pace was getting a bit too much for me, so I hid a couple of pints behind the curtain of a pub in Cheltenham. Then about three or four hours into the night the boys opened up the curtains and found about five pints behind the curtains so I got nick named the squirrel because instead of hiding nuts I hid my pints and that stuck with me.

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

Nick Wood - he seems quite intelligent and he thinks he's quite intelligent so that's half the battle and I think Will James - he's knocking on a bit now so he's got a wealth of knowledge due to his greater years over everyone else in the squad.

14. Has your sport ever brought you to tears?

I've cried in pain a few times. I've had a few operations and woken up a few times and - not bawling my eyes out - but have been in a bit of pain to be fair.

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

Forgetting the basics - trying to do fancy stuff and forgetting what rugby's all about. Rugby's a simple game, just about doing the simple things well and not trying to do the flash stuff all the time.

Where in the world is the best night out?

I'd probably say the best time out I've had is in New York, went there last a couple of years ago and I absolutely loved it. I don't go out there that much, but I love that city, it's awesome, amazing food and everything there I like, so New York.

MILES OF MEMORIES



Miles Harrison has commentated on Gloucester versus Bath derbies since 1994 and he has seen some classic encounters. Today he talks to the match day programme about the latest chapter in one of the biggest rivalries in the Guinness Premiership.

Q: These are unique games in their own right, aren't they?

MH: I REMEMBER when I started the job and we went live in 1994 that the highlight of the season - and every season since - have been the local derbies. I don't just mean Gloucester against Bath because there are others but there is something uniquely special about them.

Gloucester against Bath never fails to live up to its billing and even if the quality of the rugby has not been the highest, the reputations, the rivalry, the sense of occasion and everything that generates within a stadium makes them always special days.

People always ask me what my favourite game of last season was and I say it was Gloucester against Bath at Kingsholm. I was a fantastically raw match. For whatever reason, players manage to find that little bit extra, go that little bit deeper. There is something tremendously base and earthy about these games - the extra feeling and emotion is so vivid that there is always something going on.

Q: Can both clubs reach the play-offs?

MH: THEY should both reach the play-offs yes. The rugby they have played, not just

recently but over the season, means they are earning their right to be in the top four. Bath have definitely played some eye catching rugby and on their day are well capable of putting any team in this league to the sword. They are learning that capability and style needs to be combined with an ability not to lose matches and those lessons are starting to sink in.

In many ways, they have played better rugby than Gloucester this season but the last time I saw Gloucester live was



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their remarkable recovery against London Irish. I would wager that even the most hardened Gloucester supporters were expecting defeat at half-time in that game but they showed a tremendous amount of resolve, seemed to go deep within themselves and dragged something out to win that game that may well be vital for them at the rest of the season.

It was courageous and sometimes in a season something happens that defines

it - that game may well have been it for Gloucester.

Q: Who goes into this game as favourite?

MH: THE margins are so fine and so tight that it is almost too hard to call. Bath play a lot of rugby and that can be very hard to stop - when that comes off they can win a game in an instant but come derby day I am not always convinced that ability matters. That London Irish game and subsequently against Sale have shown that Gloucester are capable of winning games when not at their best and that could be key.

We know they can play some rugby and cause damage and that will be a concern for other teams. They have also had injuries to key guys like Qera and Delve so the sides we so now might not be the ones towards the end of the season. It's too close to call in many ways - they will be two very well matched teams.

Q: Does Gloucester's victory at the Rec have any significance?

MH: SOMETIMES people look at history and say it doesn't matter but in this case I believe it is different. We are not just talking about any other game or any other victory - we are talking about something that really matters because it created history, not just ended a sequence of it. I am sure the events at the start of the season will remain in the mind-set - if anything it will give Gloucester extra belief they can take into the game.

It will be a tremendous occasion between two genuine title contenders. The history is rich and full of great games. Whatever happens - I am not going to predict the result - will be very special for one reason or another.



SINBAD TARGETS CUP SUCCESS

Gloucester have plenty of history against the Ospreys and when the two teams meet in Coventry next month, it could be a classic.

THEY might have some extremely serious business to attend to in the Guinness Premiership over the next few weeks but James Simpson-Daniel won't be taking Ospreys lightly in their EDF Energy Cup semi-final meeting at the Ricoh Arena.

The Gloucester star knows the Kingsholm club must learn from their harsh Heineken Cup lessons when the two teams meet in the first semi-final at the Ricoh Arena on Saturday, March 28, at 2.30pm.

"I think we need to remember the lessons we have learned from playing against Ospreys," Simpson-Daniel said.

"When we went down there they were very good at making early decisions, seeing the breaks and making them pay.

"That is something that we have learned coming out of that game because they were much more clinical than us.

"I think we have learned a lot from playing them last season. Everyone involved in that game has to be aware of what is coming which is a massive challenge, but we are aware of what we have to do.

"We have got a chance to put things right and we have got to be confident that we can win. We have to show the consistency that we have been showing in the Guinness Premiership because we are capable of beating Ospreys."

Gloucester Rugby qualified for the semi-final after topping pool A by just three points ahead of London Wasps.

Simpson-Daniel believes that despite their great form in the league, that will count for nothing in the one-off game against the Welsh side.

"I think league records don't matter when it comes down to a cup game because it is essentially knock-out rugby.

"The EDF Energy Cup has been very tough this season. It is one of those tournaments where it is a little bit different because you are playing some sides that are from different regions.

"Playing somewhere that's different is one of the challenges of the tournament. It gets the blood flowing."

Simpson-Daniel is aiming to produce another eye-catching performance to keep him at the forefront of the minds of the England selectors.

His tally of 10 caps for his country would surely have been higher if his career had not been blighted by injury.

"I have just got to stay fit and basically be fit at the right times. That's what has hurt – I have been fit but not when the England internationals have come round but I'm fit and well at the moment.

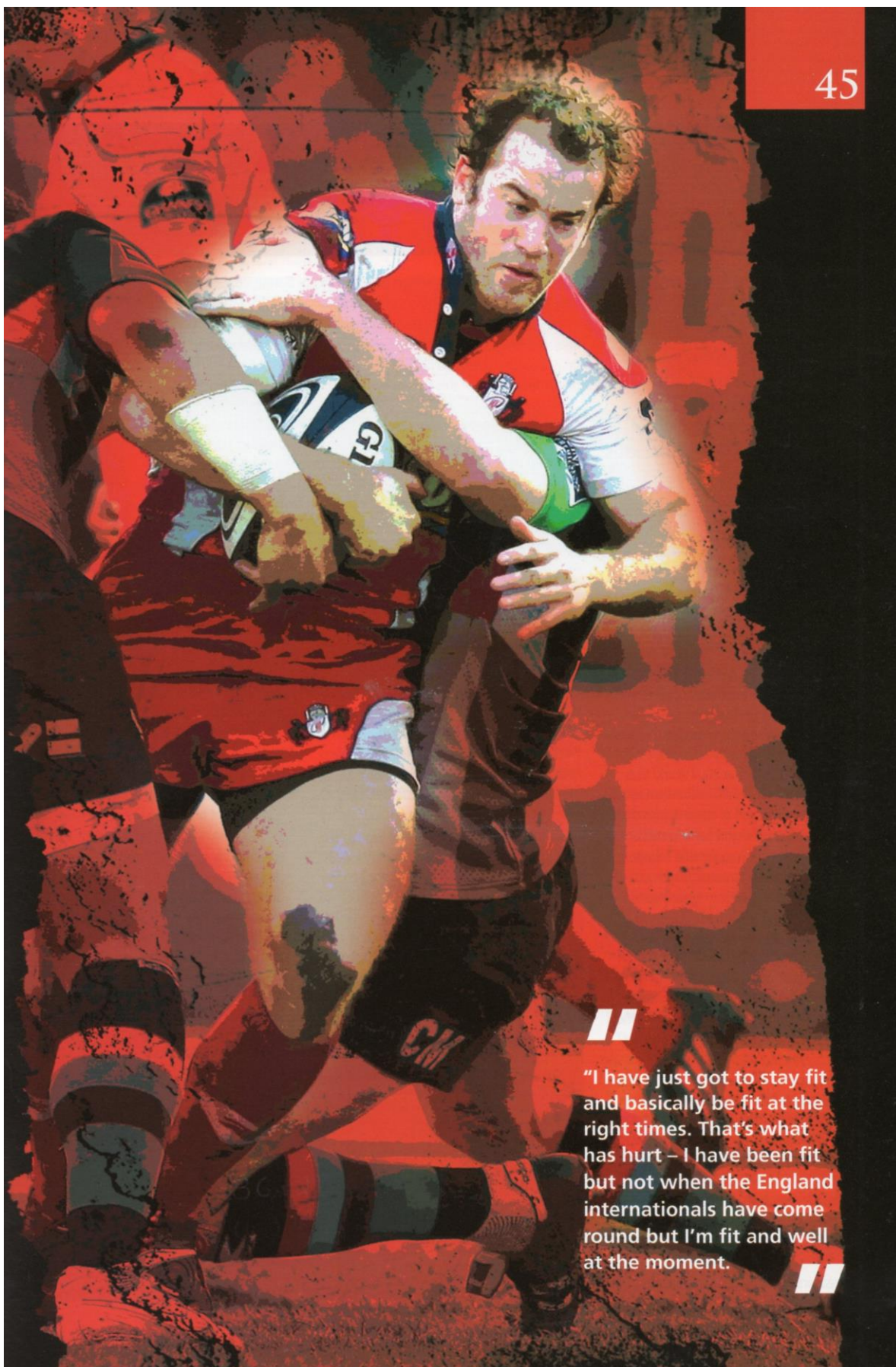
"The current coaches have shown enough confidence in me by having me in their squads.

If I can stay fit and have a run of games then I will be ready if I'm called upon. I have enough self-confidence and if I can keep myself fit then I will have a chance."

* Tickets for the semi-final, priced at £35, £28, £20 and £10 for under-15s, are on sale at www.ticketmaster.co.uk or by ringing 0844 847 2492, while hospitality packages, starting at £85 plus VAT per person, are available by telephoning 0844 873 1883 or emailing edfenergy@ricoharena.com

Tickets are also available from Gloucester Rugby at the ticket office, online at www.gloucesterrugby.co.uk or from the hotline number on 0871 871 8781.





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PETER ARNOLD

FAREWELL PHILIPPE

I suppose that the Sale game the other week was the last Kingsholm occasion graced by the great Philippe St. Andre. He's not everyone's favourite person, and his reign as Gloucester's coach wasn't always the easiest one in terms of relations with the players. However, no one in their right mind would deny his quality as a player. In fact, he may well be one of the finest wing three quarters of all time.

Many people will recall his first foray onto the Kingsholm turf. Bristol were the unfortunate victims of his obvious desire to make his mark early. The ball came to him on the Shed side, running towards Kingsholm Road. He put his foot on the gas and simply ran right round everybody to score close to the posts. The chap next to me turned and said "Ere! We'll have to fine that bloke. He's left scorch marks

on the pitch!"

A few minutes later he was at it again. This time he went the short way, jinking through. Past and possibly over what seemed like the entire Bristol defence.

I still feel that he had a few seasons left in him when he gave up playing and took on the coaching role. Who knows what other extravagances he might have perpetrated had he played a bit longer?

The rest, as they say, is history, and we wish him well in Toulon. Just as long as he doesn't take Olly Azam with him.

THE KING IS DEAD – LONG LIVE THE KINGSLEY

Of course, the departure of the fiery Frenchman leaves our old friend, Kingsley Jones, at the helm as Head Shark. While

we might, in some respects, admire Philippe St. Andre we remember Kingsley with considerable affection.

He burst upon the Kingsholm scene almost unheralded, but very soon made his mark. It quickly became obvious that we had a forthright, efficient and very savvy flank forward on our hands, but it didn't take long to find out that there was more to Mr. Jones than that. We also discovered that he was a highly motivational captain, driving the players on from first to final whistle.

Sadly, he didn't stay here as long as many of us would have liked. He entered the minefield that is the coaching profession, and to cut a fairly long story short, ended up as No.2 at Sale, where he has been doing a good enough job to step immediately into Philippe's shoes.

He has a talented squad to work with and we wish him all the best.

I think the Welsh authorities are missing a trick by not drafting him into the national set-up.

WRONG TIME

I don't have to tell you that the visit of Bath is one of the most eagerly anticipated events of the Kingsholm season. No different this year, but just think about our recent home fixtures. The last two saw us entertaining Sale and London Irish. In other words, the four leading sides in the Guinness Premiership have been fighting it out slap bang in the middle of the Six Nations tournament.

That's simply not right. There's something wrong somewhere, when the top four teams in the Guinness Premiership have to compete while castrated by the needs of the international season. Surely, you'd want to see the best sides that



Philippe St. Andre



(L to R) Jason White, Kingsley Jones (Asst. Coach), Sebastien Chabal and Magnus Lund

are available competing at this crucial juncture in the campaign.

Obviously, it's bad luck that these four teams, to say nothing of sides knocking on the door such as Harlequins and Leicester, should be competing at just this time. The computer can't foretell the future, after all. But it's a fact, and one which can easily be anticipated, that the present Six Nations slot coincides with that stage in the Guinness Premiership when things have shaken themselves out and every team knows where it stands, and what is likely to happen from here on in.

This is the pivotal period in any Guinness Premiership season. It's exactly the time when any team wants to have all its best players available. It's annoying when the various international bodies deprive clubs of those performers just when they're most needed. It's even more galling when some of the squad members spend their time warming the bench, or perhaps not making the final 22 at all.

I don't pretend to have an answer for this dilemma and it's not going to be an easy one to resolve. Perhaps the Six Nations



I don't have to tell you that the visit of Bath is one of the most eagerly anticipated events of the Kingsholm season. No different this year, but just think about our recent home fixtures. The last two saw us entertaining Sale and London Irish. In other words, the four leading sides in the Guinness Premiership have been fighting it out slap bang in the middle of the Six Nations tournament.



action against Bath

could be shifted back towards the end of the season, allowing the Guinness Premiership to run its course, but I can foresee difficulties with that, too, especially where the Heineken Cup is concerned.

All I know is that the present situation is unsatisfactory, and that some genius, somewhere, needs to sort things out.

We already have a situation where a sizeable number of supporters are losing interest in, or even resenting, the Six Nations in favour of the Guinness Premiership.

And that can't be healthy.

GLOUCESTER RUGBY
SALE SHARKS

24
17



Second half recovery dents Sharks

Saturday, February 14, Attendance: 13,466

Referee: Martin Fox



GLOUCESTER once again came from behind to secure another vital Guinness Premiership victory – this time over Sale Sharks at Kingsholm.

Not only did it back up their victory against London Irish, it put them clear at the top of the table after they overcame another half-time deficit.

Tries from Lee Thomas and Charlie Hodgson had established Sale's platform and with the likes of Luke McAlister strutting some pretty funky stuff, the Sharks dominated the opening quarter.

Thomas was the first to score when Hodgson, McAlister and Luke Abraham sustained an attack to the right and the centre broke away to touch down, ahead of the covering Rory Lawson.

Gloucester needed to get back into the contest and when Iain Balshaw ran against the face of Sale's defence, Apo Satala bundled forward before Carlos Spencer, Olly Barkley and Balshaw combined for Mark Foster to touch down.

This was comfortably Gloucester's best period of the match and they almost scored again when the hugely impressive Gareth Delve drove forward from a

scrum but Andy Hazell's pass was called forward.

However, it was Sale who pick-pocketed another try following a heavy spell of Gloucester pressure. Olly Barkley looked to get play moving to the left but Chris Jones nabbed his pass and set off towards half-way. Although Foster got back to make the tackle, Jones and Thomas combined and Hodgson followed up to score in the far left corner. He converted his own try for a 17-8 half-time lead.

Gloucester needed an immediate recovery after half-time and got it with a 41st minute try. They generated quick ball twice and when James Simpson-Daniel broke inside, his off-load was taken by Satala and he made his way to the sticks.

Thereafter, Gloucester dominated the second half without ever being able to put the Sharks away properly. There was plenty of good work by the forward pack as Somerville and co got on top and it was left to Barkley to kick Gloucester into ascendancy.

With McAlister on the field there was every chance Sale could mount a break-out but Ryan Lamb calmed Gloucester's nerve with a last minute drop goal to take them seven points clear.



Man of the Match



Greg Somerville was outstanding.



"It was another huge victory for us – we are slowly gathering momentum and that is pleasing," head coach Dean Ryan.



Timeline

7 mins	
Hodgson pen	0-3
23 mins	
Thomas try, Hodgson con	0-10
30 mins	
Barkley pen	3-10
36 mins	
Foster try	8-10
40 mins	
Hodgson try and con	8-17
41 mins	
Satala try, Barkley con	15-17
44 mins	
Barkley pen	18-17
62 mins	
Barkley pen	21-17
79 mins	
Lamb drop-goal	24-17

Gloucester Line-up

15	Iain Balshaw	(1t)
14	Mark Foster	
13	Matthew Watkins	
12	Olly Barkley	(3p, 1c)
11	James Simpson-Daniel	
10	Carlos Spencer	
9	Rory Lawson	
1	Nick Wood	
2	Olivier Azam	(capt)
3	Greg Somerville	
4	Will James	
5	Alex Brown	
6	Apolosi Satala	(1t)
7	Andrew Hazell	
8	Gareth Delve	
REPS		
16	Andy Titterrell	(Azam)
17	Jack Foster	
18	Adam Eustace	(James)
19	Dan Williams	
20	Ryan Lamb	(Spencer)
21	Anthony Allen	(S-Daniel)
22	Charlie Sharples	(Watkins)

HARLEQUINS
GLOUCESTER RUGBY

14
9



Williams try fires Quins

Saturday, February 21, Attendance: 12,386

Referee: Dave Pearson



TOM WILLIAMS' 77th minute try sealed a famous victory for Harlequins - but Gloucester returned to the top of the Guinness Premiership last Saturday.

In what was a thoroughly captivating contest, Quins scored both tries but Gloucester's defence, work-rate and commitment were excellent and they could easily have snatched the game late on when Apo Satala launched a late break but Quins snuffed out the danger.

There were some excellent performances from Gareth Delve and the outstanding Andy Hazell but Gloucester lost out in the kicking contest, particularly in the last quarter, and Quins built on their momentum to snatch the points.

The hosts got a great start when Nick Evans made a lovely midfield break away from the first wave of cover and Iain Balshaw was unable to make the last tackle. Evans converted his own score and Quins were 7-0 ahead.

But Gloucester just about shaded the rest of the half but only had two Olly Barkley penalties to show for their efforts when they really could have scored a couple of tries.

However, Barkley nudged Gloucester into the



lead after 47 minutes with his third penalty and with the Gloucester scrum going into over-drive, there was the very real prospect they may eek out another priceless victory.

And when Chris Malone inexplicably missed a straight-forward penalty followed by a long effort after 70 minutes, Gloucester were hanging on grimly.

The turning point came when Quins appeared to knock-on chasing through on a high kick but when Rory Lawson's kick went straight out, the hosts put together a 10-phase sequence that involved Tom Guest, Williams and then crucially Jordan Turner-Hall got in behind the defence and from the ruck, Williams pounced to score to settle a riveting contest.

Man of the Match



Andy Hazell produced an outstanding all-round performance.



We got a bonus point away from home but ultimately we are frustrated," head coach Dean Ryan.



Timeline

🏉 8 mins	
Evans try and con	7-0
🏉 14 mins	
Barkley pen	7-3
🏉 28 mins	
Barkley pen	7-6
🏉 47 mins	
Barkley pen	7-9
🏉 77 mins	
Williams try, Malone con	14-9

Gloucester Line-up

15	Iain Balshaw	
14	Charlie Sharples	
13	Henry Trinder	
12	Olly Barkley	(3p)
11	James Simpson-Daniel	
10	Carlos Spencer	
9	Rory Lawson	
1	Nick Wood	
2	Andy Titterrell	
3	Greg Somerville	
4	Marco Bortolami	
5	Alex Brown	
6	Luke Narraway	
7	Andrew Hazell	
8	Gareth Delve	(capt)
REPS		
16	Olivier Azam	
17	Alasdair Dickinson	
18	Adam Eustace	(Bortolami)
19	Apolosi Satala	(Delve)
20	Ryan Lamb	(Spencer)
21	Anthony Allen	(Trinder)
22	Mark Foster	