

GLOUCESTER RUGBY  
HERITAGE

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DID YOU  
KNOW?**Why didn't we think of this one at Coventry recently?**

On 21st January 1961, Gloucester visited Wasps and lost 10-6, the referee explaining that, "...the match was played 35 minutes each way at the request of the Gloucester skipper who stated on arrival that they wished to catch an early train home".

**Do You Love Wing Forwards?**

Tom Voyce, arguably the greatest of Gloucester players, revolutionised the role of the wing forward in the 1920s. He transformed the flanker from being just another member of the pack of forwards to a specialist ball-winner who broke quickly, chased down the backs and added speed to physicality.

He received plaudits aplenty for his exploits, earning titles such as "The Scourge of the Welsh" and "The Father of Wing Forwards". His England captain, Wavell Wakefield said that he always wrote Tom's name first onto the team sheet.

His exploits for the British Isles teams in South Africa in 1924 were legendary, and long remembered. When the Springboks visited Kingsholm in 1960, their Manager, Ferdie Berch, said how pleased he was to have the opportunity to meet Tom, who he described as "...the originator of the more, how shall I say, robust type of play. He laid the foundations of the play today."

Putting aside the fact that Rugby League exterminated



Tom Voyce



Dai Gent

wing forwards as a species, not everyone in the union game was a fan either. Dai Gent, who played scrum half for Gloucester and England, and later became rugby correspondent of the Sunday Times, was quite schizophrenic about his friend, Tom Voyce.

He wrote in 1932: "I hate all 'wing' forwards as a class. I think their type has been a curse to the game. But if the gods will send you a couple of geniuses in that special position at the same time, then you are a fool not to take what they give you! Voyce and Price were great players both, and of different types, though 'wing' forwards, and I could see much reason for playing both these delightful people, and I was only sorry they were 'wing' forwards!"

**Ah! Those were the Days for Forward Play**

On Christmas Day 1875, the Gloucester Chronicle carried a report of a match between Gloucester and Ross. Although played, as today, as a 15-a-side game, 10 players on each side were forwards, with 2 backs, 1 three-quarter-back and 2 half-backs.

The report reads as follows: "A more equal game or more sharply-contested match could not have taken place than this, which was played at Ross on Friday last, according to Rugby Union rules. The result was a draw, neither side scoring any point. The forwards on both sides played up well and the tackling was very good, so that few runs were made, and long and

