



# GLOUCESTER SECOND ROW FORWARDS PART 3

IN THE EARLY DAYS OF RUGBY THERE WERE NO SPECIALISTS IN THE FORWARDS. WHEN A SCRUM FORMED, THE FIRST TO ARRIVE MADE UP THE FRONT ROW AND SO ON. IT WAS MANY YEARS BEFORE PLAYERS WOULD BECOME ASSOCIATED WITH PARTICULAR POSITIONS.



The story of Gloucester's powerhouse forwards continues as professional rugby appears on the horizon.

**JOHN ETHERIDGE**  
JOHN was born on 8 June 1965 and educated at Longlevens School. He was a big mobile forward who made 117 appearances from 1985 to 1990.



His first rugby was played for Gloucester All Blues and Old Richians, before he made his debut for Gloucester playing one game in the 1984-85 season on Easter Saturday against New Brighton.

It took him some time to break through as a regular but, by 1986-87, he was the first choice second row partner of either John Brain or Nigel Scrivens.

He was now attracting the attention of the regional and national selectors. He played for

England 'B' in 1989, and in the following year appeared in all the South-West's inter-regional games.

However, the 1989-90 season saw John finding competition at Gloucester increasingly tough, and at the end of it moved on to Northampton. He then switched his allegiance to Ireland through the fact that his father was Irish. He played in five Ireland 'A' internationals, but never made it into the senior team.

**JOHN BRAIN**  
JOHN was born on 7 June 1960 and educated at the King's School, Gloucester. He made 261 appearances for Gloucester from his first game against Harlequins in October 1979 to his last against the same opponents in January 1991. He then moved on to Bedford for a couple of seasons before retirement.



Coaching then followed at Gloucester as assistant to Philippe Saint-Andre, then as a sound Director of Rugby at Worcester, guiding them into the Premiership for the first time. A period as forwards' coach at Bristol was next, and then he returned to Kingsholm as talent scout, scrum coach and team manager.

John played local rugby for Gloucester Old Boys before trying his luck at Kingsholm. But after that debut in 1979, he found strong competition for a second row place from Steve Boyle and John Orwin, and it was not until the 1982-83 season that he nailed down a regular starting spot. Not only that, he was selected to tour Italy with the England Under 23's team.

In 1987-88 he played in all three games for the South-West in the regional competition, and in 1990 was in the South-West team that played Leinster at Kingsholm.

John did not often score tries, he excelled in scrums and line-outs, but in the league game at Leicester in January 1990 he received a pass on the Tigers' 22, and showed great drive to score a glorious try. Gloucester won the game 26-16.

**NIGEL SCRIVENS**  
NIGEL was the kind of forward every club needs. He did all the essential work around the scrums and line-outs and contributed manfully around the field. He





COMING UP...

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was unspectacular but was remarkably consistent. Every game you knew what to expect - second row forward play of the highest standard.

He was born on 12 October 1957, and first played for his home town club, Cirencester, before first appearing for Gloucester as a replacement against Coventry in September 1982.

As with many Gloucester players competition for places was fierce and it was not until 1986-87 that Nigel became an automatic choice, forging fruitful partnerships with John Brain and John Etheridge. He was a member of the Pilkington Cup final team that lost to Bath in 1990.

From 1982 to 1992 Nigel made 230 appearances for Gloucester, and then played the 1992-93 season for London Welsh. Stuart Barnes of Bath and England said of him, "He's a tough man and a decent man."

**DAVE SIMS**

**BORN on 22 November 1969 in Gloucester, Dave had already played club rugby locally for Longlevens and in Australia for Sunnybank in Brisbane, before making his debut for the Cherry and Whites against Cheltenham in November 1988, scoring a try in the 48-3 win. Tony Windo made his debut in the same game and also scored a try.**

In his early days he played at No.8 but over time played more and more in the second row. By the 1990-91 season Dave was fully established and his rugged no nonsense hard tackling style made him a Shed favourite.

The mid-nineties proved to be a difficult time for Gloucester and they flirted with relegation at times, no more so than in 1995-96, the first season that Dave was made club captain.

The last game of the season

was a straight relegation shoot-out between Gloucester and Saracens. Sims, leading by example, inspired Gloucester to a 17-10 win which apparently consigned Saracens to the drop. However, it was later decided there would be no relegation that season, and Sarries were saved. Is it cynical to wonder if the decision might have been different had Gloucester finished in the relegation place?

Professionalism arrived in 1996 and Dave became Gloucester's first full-time contracted player. He was in the team in 1998 when Gloucester won the C&G Cup against Bedford, and he was again captain the following season when the club again won the trophy against the same opposition.

England recognition came late, but he was capped three times in 1998, twice against New Zealand and once against South Africa. He also appeared for the South-West Divisional team 12 times, and the Barbarians on three occasions.

Dave left Gloucester for Worcester in 1999, and later had spells with Bedford, Launceston, and Taunton. For Gloucester he made 257 appearances, scoring 30 tries.

**IAN JONES**

**OVERSEAS players nearing the end of their careers are sometimes perceived to be topping up their pension when playing in the Premiership. Ian Jones could never be accused of that.**

In the two seasons he was at Kingsholm from 1999-2001 he gave his all, and was very popular with the fans. He was one of the biggest signings in Gloucester's history having made 79 appearances for the All Blacks from 1990 to 1999, forging a legendary second row partnership with Robin Brooke.

Scotland seemed to feature strongly in his career. His first test was against them in June 1990 at Dunedin, his fiftieth cap was on the same ground against the same opposition and he scored a try. Not only that, his final All Black cap, off the bench in the 1999 World Cup, was again against Scotland.

Born on 17 April 1967, Ian had started his career with Northland in 1988 and, with the arrival of professional rugby, played for Waikato Chiefs from 1996 to 1999, often as captain.

He was a lithe 6ft 6ins tall, and very mobile for a second rower. He played in three World Cups, 1991, 1995 and 1999, and in two tests against the British Lions in 1993.



At Gloucester he ruled the line-out and made some barnstorming runs ball in hand. He played in six of eight games in Gloucester's Heineken Cup campaign of 2000-01, including the semi-final loss to Leicester, at Vicarage Road, Watford.

Sadly this was to be his swansong, for he left to play one season with Wasps in 2001-02 before retirement.



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