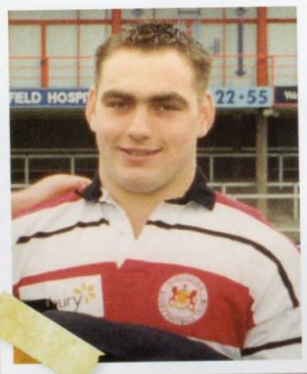


TREVOR WOODMAN



TREVOR WAS A LOOSE-HEAD PROP WHO WON A WORLD CUP WINNER'S MEDAL AND 22 ENGLAND CAPS, BUT WHOSE CAREER WAS BLIGHTED THROUGH INJURY.

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Trevor Woodman was a supreme scrummager and talented ball-carrier, with a turn of speed most unusual in a prop. He developed into one of the best loose-head props in world rugby, and a member of that England team, along with Phil Vickery, which won the World Cup in 2003.

Everybody considers Trevor to be a Cornishman, but he was actually born in Plymouth on 4 August 1976, and was brought up in Liskeard in Cornwall. He played rugby for his local club and also for Cornwall at under 16 level, before having short spells at Plymouth Albion and Bath. Whilst with the latter club he appeared for England Colts, accompanied by Phil Vickery and Phil Greening.

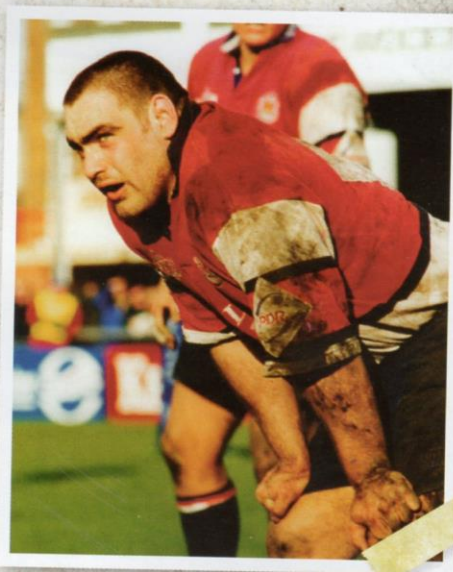
Trevor joined Gloucester in 1996 and played a few games for the United, before making his first fifteen debut off the bench against Harlequins on 13 April that year. His first start did not come until 5 November 1996 against Combined Services.

For two seasons Trevor found games difficult to come by as Andy Deacon and then Tony

Windo were in regular possession of the loose-head spot. In the 1998-99 season he began to break through, and by 1999-2000, the partnership of Woodman and Vickery became established.

Considering Trevor's speed around the field it was surprising that he did not score his first try until his 40th appearance on 1 May 1999 against Sale. However, his talent had already been spotted by the England selectors and in 1998-99 he played a full season of seven games for England 'A'.

He won his first full cap off the bench in a World Cup warm-up game against USA in August 1999. He missed England's tour of South Africa in 2000 due to injury, but did make the American tour of 2001, although he was not capped.



Another four caps as a replacement followed through 2001 and 2002, as Graham Rowntree hung on to his starting position, until Trevor's breakthrough came when selected to start against New Zealand in November 2002. England won 31-28 and the Times wrote of Woodman, "...excellent first start and powerful force in loose play." Unfortunately, Trevor picked up yet another injury, this time



to his neck, in the game and missed the rest of the autumn internationals, and was absent for three months in all.

In the Six Nations of 2003 he was only used as a replacement against Ireland and Scotland. No matter, he was selected for England's World Cup party to go to Australia. He played in five of the games, and England's official book on the campaign wrote that in the semi-final against France, "The front row of Trevor Woodman, Steve Thompson and Phil Vickery hardly yielded an inch all night".

The same front row played in the famous final against Australia which England won 20-17. Again, the England scrum was dominant, anchored by the powerful front-row, but was penalised several times although going forward. These were decisions that baffled most observers. Trevor played in all of England's Six Nations games in 2004, and won his 22nd and final cap on England's tour of New Zealand on 19 June 2004.

In the 2000-01 season Gloucester qualified to play in the Heineken Cup for the first time. Trevor, however, missed the first four rounds of games through injury. He played in the final two group games against Llanelli and Roma and the quarter-final against Cardiff, only to suffer a further injury which stopped him appearing in the losing semi-final against Leicester.

In 2002 Trevor came off the bench, when Gloucester beat Bristol in the final of the Zurich Championship. In the first game of the 2002-03 season, at the Stoop against Harlequins, he scored the winning try, running in from 25 metres, with only minutes left on the clock. In 2003 there was further success when Gloucester, with Trevor in the team, beat Northampton 40-22 to win the Powergen Cup, but a few weeks later he missed the final of the Zurich Championship against Wasps through yet another injury.

Only six days after winning the World Cup, Trevor came on as a replacement in a Premiership game at Kingsholm against Northampton. Within minutes of taking to the field he received the ball just outside Northampton's 22, and the Times takes up the story: "Woodman capped the most golden week of his life by returning home to score the try

that saw Gloucester overhaul Northampton in the 64th minute. He produced an indecent turn of speed for a prop, and then his trade mark sidestep, in a thirty metre rollicking run to break three tackles and score in the right corner."

Unfortunately, this season following the World Cup proved to be Trevor's last at Gloucester. His final game was the last one of the campaign on 15 May 2004 against Sale.

He joined Sale in the summer of 2004, and had only appeared three times for his new club before a back injury suffered in the gym proved to be so serious that he was forced to retire from the game at the early age of 28. The problem was a trapped sciatic nerve caused by a bulging disc in his lower back. After a period of depressing unemployment, Trevor went to Australia where he coached at Sydney University, and was eventually recruited by the Australian Rugby Union as a scrum consultant. In 2009 he became forwards' coach at Wasps, before taking up the same position at Gloucester in 2014.

During his career at Kingsholm from 1996 to 2004, Trevor made 136 appearances, and scored eight tries. Injury hampered him throughout, and one wonders how many more England caps he could have achieved, had he managed to avoid such wretched bad luck.

