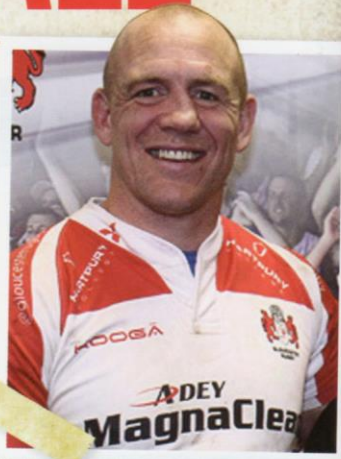


MIKE TINDALL

MIKE TINDALL HAD ALREADY GIVEN STERLING SERVICE IN THE CAUSE OF BATH RUGBY FOR SEVERAL SEASONS BEFORE MAKING THE SHORT JOURNEY TO KINGSHOLM. HE HAD WON 41 ENGLAND CAPS BY THIS TIME, INCLUDING A WORLD CUP WINNER'S MEDAL. HE WOULD WIN ANOTHER 34 CAPS WHILST AT GLOUCESTER, AS WELL AS CAPTAINING THE CLUB.



36

Michael James Tindall was born 18 October 1978 in Otley, Yorkshire, and was educated at Queen Elizabeth Grammar School, Wakefield. His father Phil, also a rugby player, captained the Otley club.

In 1997 as an 18-year-old, Mike joined Bath, who were obviously impressed by his speed, eye for an angle, as well as his bulk which made him difficult to stop. He was also a deadly tackler.

At that time Bath's centres were

Jeremy Guscott and Philip de Glanville, but by the 2000-01 season, Mike was a regular centre, partnering Kevin Maggs, the Irish International.

Mike won his first England cap in February 2000 against Ireland at Twickenham, partnering Mike Catt in the centre, and he also scored a try, as the Times put it, "Tindall galloped unstopably into the corner". England won 50-18.

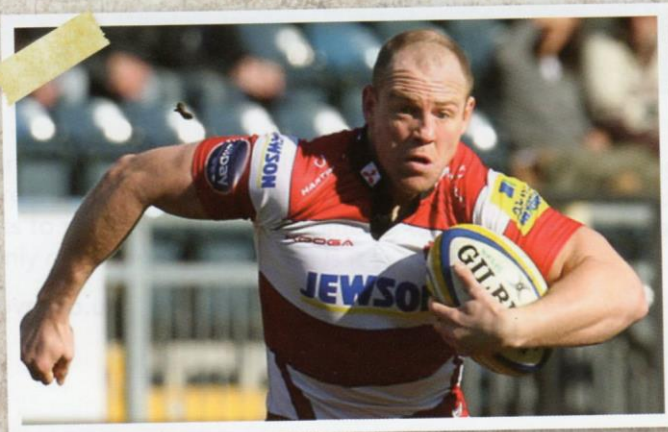
At this point he was playing at

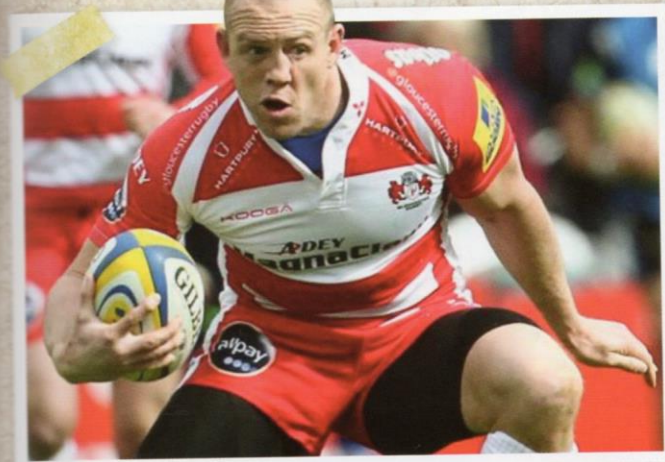
inside centre, but later he would partner Will Greenwood and move to outside.

In 2003 England and Ireland had both won all four of their games in the Six Nations, and met in Dublin to play for the Grand Slam. Into the second half the game was still in the balance with England leading 13-6, when, according to the Times' Rugby Correspondent, "Grayson held up a pass for Mike Tindall to hit the straightest of lines and then curve away from Hickie and drive over the line through Murphy's tackle." Ireland buckled and England went on to win 41-6. Mike was a regular in England's World Cup campaign in 2003. He was dropped for the semi-final in favour of Mike Catt, but was restored to the team which beat Australia 20-17 in the final.

In the 2003-04 season Bath topped the Premiership, but lost in the play-off final to Wasps, and Mike was a member of the Bath team.

After eight years, and 113 appearances at Bath, Mike





signed a three-year contract to join Gloucester for the start of the 2005-06 season, making his debut on 4 September against Worcester. Initially his centre partner was Henry Paul, but following the latter's departure, he quickly formed a formidable centre partnership with Anthony Allen.

Mike's first try came in December, in the crushing European Challenge Cup win over Toulon in France 74-3! This was a good season for the Cherry and Whites, and Mike was in the team which beat London Irish 36-34, after extra time, in the final of the European Challenge Cup at the Stoop.

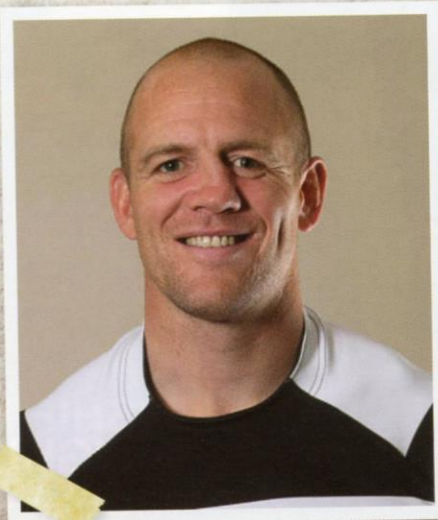
The following season saw the emergence of Ryan Lamb at fly-half, which gave extra bite to the back division. Gloucester topped the Premiership table but lost the play-off final to Leicester. However, Mike missed the last few weeks of the season having broken his leg against Newcastle in April. As a result, he could take no part in the 2007 World Cup.

He was back playing for Gloucester soon after the start of the 2007-08 season. An example of his courage was demonstrated in February 2008, when playing for England against Wales, in tackling Mark Jones he was badly injured, suffering a lacerated liver. Typically, he

was playing again by April.

In 2008 Mike signed a new three-year contract and was made club captain for the 2008-09 season, but missed a lot of games due to injury, although he did appear in four of the Six Nations Games. He played in the semi-final of the EDF Cup against Ospreys which the Cherry and Whites won 17-0 at the Ricoh Stadium, Coventry, but damage to the medial ligament in his right knee ended his season, and so he missed Gloucester's heavy defeat to Cardiff in the final of the competition at Twickenham.

Tins was back for the start of the following season, and formed a potent centre partnership with Eliota Fuimaono-Sapolu, but the injury curse struck again in October against Sale, when a



hamstring injury kept him out until the end of February 2010.

Undaunted, Mike played in both the tests on England's tour of Australia in the summer of 2010. Then in 2011 in the absence of Lewis Moody, Mike was made England captain for the Six Nations games against Wales, Italy, France and Scotland. He retained the captaincy for World Cup warm-up games against Wales and Ireland. He made three appearances in the World Cup, and the game against Scotland in the quarter-finals at Auckland on 1 October 2011, proved to be his final international appearance.

In March 2011 Mike had signed a one-year renewal on his contract with Gloucester, but an ankle injury suffered whilst captaining England against Scotland meant that he missed Gloucester's victory over Newcastle in the final of the LV= Cup.

In June 2012 Mike agreed a new one-year contract to play as player and backs coach. This was renewed for the 2013-14 season. Those last three seasons were relatively injury free. Mike played his final game for Gloucester on 3 May 2014 against London Irish. He announced his retirement from professional rugby in July that year.

Despite the number of injuries he suffered, it was quite an achievement to win 75 England caps. He made 178 appearances for Gloucester, scoring 19 tries, two conversions and three penalties. He also played five times for the Barbarians, scoring a try against England in May 2012.

He was not, however quite finished with rugby, for he went on to play for his local club, Minchinhampton, making his debut against Gloucester All Blues in October 2014.

Mike is married to Zara, daughter of Princess Anne.