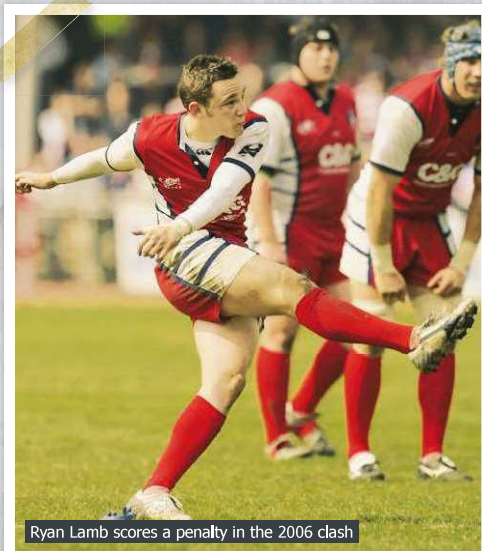


# WELCOME TO WORCESTER WARRIORS

WORCESTER RUGBY CLUB WAS FOUNDED IN 1871, A FULL TWO YEARS BEFORE GLOUCESTER RUGBY. THEIR FIRST GAME WAS ON 8 NOVEMBER 1871 AND THE OPPONENTS WERE WORCESTER ARTILLERY.

The club must have prospered quickly, because by November 1877, Worcester and Gloucester met for the first time. Travelling to Worcester, Gloucester achieved an overwhelming win by 8 goals and 4 tries to nil. The Gloucester team was led by Frank Brown, who captained the club from 1876 to 1883. Also, in the side were the legendary Boughton brothers, Hubert and William. Frank Brown scored four tries, William three and Hubert one, who also kicked eight conversions.

The next time the clubs met was on 12 November 1881, again at Worcester, and the winning margin in favour of Gloucester was much tighter, at one goal and two tries to nil. However, there were problems. The home crowd prevented the second conversion from being attempted, and had invaded the pitch several times during the game. Whether this caused a fracture between the clubs is unknown, but they did not play again (at least at first team level) for 117 years.



Ryan Lamb scores a penalty in the 2006 clash

The Worcester club folded in 1896, only to be reformed in 1908. By 1930 they were back on Gloucester's fixture list, but playing the United. This continued on a regular basis until the late fifties. Worcester moved to Sixways in September 1975, and soon after the first national leagues began, they started their inexorable rise. In 1990 they won North Midlands 1, and by 1998 had reached League 1 (now known as the Championship). A lot of this success was due to the investment provided by owner Cecil Duckworth. Worcester finally attained Premiership status in 2004, with John Brain as Director of Rugby. Two years later the Warriors had a good run in the European Challenge Cup.

## **22 April 2006, Kingsholm European Challenge Cup Semi Final Gloucester 31 Worcester 23**

The Gloucester team was: Ollie Morgan; James Simpson-Daniel, Mike Tindall, Anthony Allan, Mark Foster; Ryan Lamb, Peter Richards; Patrice Collazo, Mefin Davies, Gary Powell, Adam Eustace, Alex Brown, Peter Buxton (captain), Andy Hazell, James Forrester. Replacements: Jack Forster, Jonathan Pendlebury, Luke Narraway, Ludovic Mercier, James Bailey.

The Cherry & Whites got off to a quick start with two penalties from Ryan Lamb, and a try from Anthony Allen, which Lamb also converted. Worcester fought back bravely with tries from Shane Drahm and Pat Sanderson. The former converted the tries and added a penalty so that at half-time the Warriors were leading 17-13. The home side were further embarrassed as Drahm dropped a goal as well as kicking another penalty. Worcester were now two scores to the good and an upset seemed likely. A penalty from Ludovic Mercier left Gloucester trailing 23-16 well into the second half. However, tries from James Simpson-Daniel and Mark Foster put Gloucester back in the lead at 28-23, whilst a last-minute penalty from Lamb was the icing on the cake.

Worcester went one better in 2008 and reached the final of the Challenge Cup only to lose 24-16 to Bath. The game was played at Kingsholm.

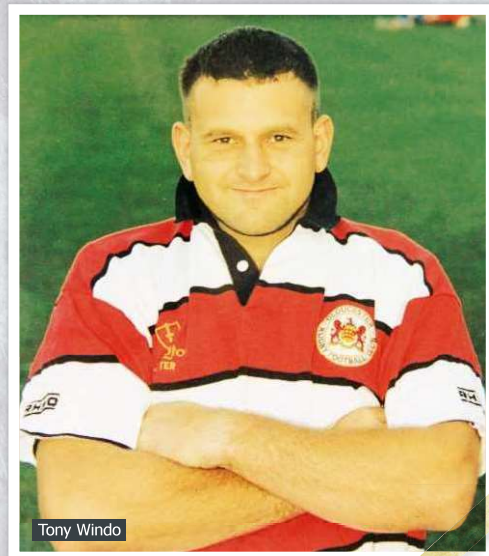
#### Gloucester/Worcester Players

There are several players who have represented both clubs. Full-back Tim Smith, played 351 times for Gloucester from 1982-96, scoring 2703 points. He then went to Worcester and in three seasons helped them move up the leagues from National Division 4 (North) to League 1. In his first season he scored 242 points breaking the club record.

Prop Tony Windo, a Shed favourite, played eleven seasons at Kingsholm before moving on to Worcester in 1999. He was a regular for a further nine seasons there, before he made his final appearance in 2008, when Worcester, as mentioned earlier, played Bath in the final of the European Challenge Cup, ironically, at Kingsholm. He had been such a stalwart for the Warriors that he was awarded a testimonial game in August 2008. Tony went on to join the coaching staff at Sixways.



Tim Smith



Tony Windo

Ryan Lamb, the mercurial fly-half who scored 574 points for Gloucester, had left for spells at London Irish, Northampton and Leicester, before arriving at Sixways in the middle of the 2013-14 season. By the last game Worcester were already doomed to relegation, having only won one game. The final game was against Gloucester, and an inspired Lamb scored a try, two conversions and three penalties, as the Warriors won 28-27. There was more drama the following season, when Worcester played Bristol in the Championship final (played over two legs) to determine which team would gain promotion to the Premiership. With ten minutes of the second leg to go, Bristol were two scores clear, only for Worcester to touch down twice, leaving the conversion to decide if Worcester would prevail. Ryan Lamb stepped up to put the ball between the posts for a remarkable victory.



Ryan Lamb

There has been speculation recently about the merits or otherwise of relegation. With so many games already cancelled through Covid infections, and points awarded to teams which do not take to the field, it seemed unfair that clubs which had played every game were being disadvantaged, and it is only equitable that, for this season at least, relegation has been suspended. It has been argued that it would render many games uninteresting when relegation was not an issue. Currently, Worcester and Gloucester are the bottom two. There is no danger that with this local derby, there will be any lack of passion on the field. If only the Shed could be full as well!