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# sale SHARKS

Zurich Premiership Round Twenty One  
**v Gloucester**

Friday 15th April 2005

Kick-Off 7:45pm

Official Match Programme £2.50

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# What Have You Got Against Us?

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While much has been made of Sale's poor run of form, fellow top-three hopefuls Gloucester arrive at Edgeley Park tonight also in something of a slump.

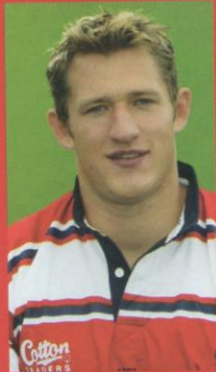


James Simpson-Daniel

Their surprise 33-15 defeat by relegation-threatened Leeds last weekend means they have won just once in their last five outings and left coach Dean Ryan admitting: "We aren't playing very well. When we are down to the bones we are not a top-three side."

And the plain facts back Ryan's comments up, with the Cherry and Whites having slipped into sixth in the Zurich Premiership after last weekend's results.

Yet a victory tonight could propel Gloucester level on points with the Sharks and leave them in with a real chance of claiming a top-three spot and therefore one last shot at silverware having already exited both the Heineken and Powergen Cups. Their European campaign ended in particularly disappointing fashion as a 27-0 humbling at Kingsholm by Stade Francais - their first ever loss in the competition on home turf - condemned them to second place in Pool Six.



James Forrester

And when a late, late Andy Beattie try gave Bath a thrilling 24-19 extra-time victory - also in front of the fearsome 'Shed-heads' - in the Powergen Cup semi-finals early last month, Gloucester had only the Zurich Championship left to play for.

A 26-18 defeat by Northampton on their next outing saw their hopes of a top-three finish also suffer a setback and while they edged out London Irish the following week, their defeat by Leeds leaves them seven points adrift of Bath with games running out.

Despite that they will travel north in confident mood, with the head-to-head record leaning firmly in their favour.

Of the 17 Premiership games between the sides, Gloucester's 11 wins represent a strike rate of almost 65% and with two draws taken into account, Sale have recorded just four victories over the men from the south west.



Olivier Azam

Ryan's men are yet to win at Edgeley Park, though, after last year's corresponding fixture - the first between the sides in Stockport - ended in a 38-20 victory for the Sharks thanks in no small part to a hat-trick from Steve Hanley that took his career tally against the Cherry and Whites to seven.

But if the Cumbrian is to improve that record tonight he will have to get the better of a backline featuring **JAMES SIMPSON-DANIEL**. Still short of his 23rd birthday, Simpson-Daniel -

whose younger brother Mark is on the Sharks' books - is a huge talent but has been blighted by injuries and illness.

After bursting on to the international scene with impressive displays against the might of New Zealand and Australia in 2002, the speedster was laid low by a bout of glandular fever and has only won seven international caps to date.

The man they call 'Sinbad' has been switched from wing to the centres this season, but in both positions he is equally able to destroy even the tightest of defences with his raw pace and skill with ball in hand.

Up front, the eye-catching performances generally come from **JAMES FORRESTER**, whose tremendous all-round game has already seen him mentioned in the same breath as legendary French back-rower Laurent Cabannes.

At 24, Forrester is cut from the same cloth as our Chris Jones with his combination of power and pace making him a fearsome opponent both packing down and the loose.

Like Jones, Forrester has an eye for the spectacular try as none other than Jonah Lomu can testify - the legendary All Black was helpless as the wing he was marshalling was breached by a trademark Forrester burst for his first try in England colours back in 2002, albeit in an uncapped match against the Barbarians.

That is far from a one-off, though, and with his versatility meaning he is happy on either flank or at No 8, Forrester is sure to be an England regular of the future.

The youthful exuberance Forrester brings to the Gloucester pack is perfectly counter-balanced with the experience of hooker **OLIVIER AZAM**.

The 30-year-old is a typically no-nonsense French forward, a fact borne out by his seven yellow cards and one sending-off in his four years in England. Indeed his solitary red card sparked one of rugby's most unseemly episodes as Rob Andrew accused Azam of making racist comments to Epi Taione before later withdrawing the claims after being banned from Kingsholm.

Brought to this country by Philippe Saint-Andre, Azam - who can play at both hooker and prop - is now in his second spell at Gloucester and remains a cult figure for his 100% commitment to the cause.

# Gloucester

**Sale Sharks**

15	Jason <b>ROBINSON (c)</b>	pts	sub	by	score	pen
14	Mark <b>CUETO</b>					
13	Chris <b>RHYS-JONES</b>					
12	Robert <b>TODD</b>					
11	Steve <b>HANLEY</b>					
10	Mike <b>HERCUS</b>					
9	Bryan <b>REDPATH</b>					
1	Andrew <b>SHERIDAN</b>					
2	Andy <b>TITTERRELL</b>					
3	Barry <b>STEWART</b>					
4	Chris <b>JONES</b>					
5	Dean <b>SCHOFIELD</b>					
6	Jason <b>WHITE</b>					
7	Magnus <b>LUND</b>					
8	Sebastien <b>CHABAL</b>					

**Substitutes**

16	Sebastien <b>BRUNO</b>					
17	Stuart <b>TURNER</b>					
18	Fernandez <b>LOBBE</b>					
19	Peter <b>ANGLESEA</b>					
20	John <b>PAYNE</b>					
21	David <b>BLAIR</b>					
22	Sillio <b>MARTENS</b>					

\* WE WOULD REMIND SPECTATORS AROUND THE GROUND THAT STANDING TO WATCH THE GAME CONTRAVENES THE SAFETY LICENCE AND WOULD REQUEST THAT SUPPORTERS ARE SEATED TO WATCH THE GAME. WE WOULD BE GRATEFUL IF YOU COULD ADHERE TO THIS REQUEST  
 \* EDGELEY PARK HAS A POLICY OF NO SMOKING IN THE SEATED AREAS. PLEASE DO NOT SMOKE IN YOUR SEATS AS FELLOW SUPPORTERS NEAR TO YOU MAY WELL BE NONE SMOKERS  
 \* DRUMS HAVE BEEN BROUGHT INTO EDGELEY PARK RECENTLY FOR RUGBY GAMES AND WHILST WE DO NOT HAVE A PROBLEM WITH THEM, YOUR FELLOW SUPPORTERS NEARBY MAY NOT LIKE THEM. IF THIS IS THE CASE A STEWARD MAY BE DIRECT YOU TO A LESS POPULATED AREA SO THAT EVERYONE IN THE GROUND CAN THOROUGHLY ENJOY THEIR FRIDAY NIGHT EXPERIENCE  
 \* COULD WE ASK SUPPORTERS TO DISPOSE OF ALL LITTER IN THE CORRECT MANNER. STOCKPORT MBC ARE QUITE CONCERNED ABOUT THE AMOUNT OF LITTER LEFT AROUND THE GROUND AFTER GAMES. I AM SURE YOUR BEST EFFORTS IN HELPING US WITH THIS PROBLEM WILL BE GREATLY APPRECIATED, NOT ONLY BY STOCKPORT MBC BUT ALSO THE LOCAL RESIDENTS.

**Gloucester**

Jon <b>GOODRIDGE</b>	15
Marcel <b>GARVEY</b>	14
James <b>SIMPSON-DANIEL</b>	13
Mark <b>FOSTER</b>	12
Seti <b>KIOLE</b>	11
Duncan <b>McRAE</b>	10
Alex <b>PAGE</b>	9
Olivier <b>AZAM</b>	1
Mefin <b>DAVIES</b>	2
Gary <b>POWELL</b>	3
Adam <b>EUSTACE</b>	4
Alex <b>BROWN</b>	5
Peter <b>BUXTON</b>	6
Jake <b>BOER</b>	7
James <b>FORRESTER</b>	8

**Substitutes**

Nick <b>WOOD</b>	16
Terry <b>SIGLEY</b>	17
Luke <b>NARRAWAY</b>	18
James <b>MERRIMAN</b>	19
Andy <b>GOMMERSALL</b>	20
Brad <b>DAVIES</b>	21
Nathan <b>MAUGER</b>	22

**Tonight's Officials**

<b>Referee</b>	Mr S Lander
<b>Touch Judge 1</b>	Mr B Campsall
<b>Touch Judge 2</b>	Mr D J Kurk
<b>Reserve</b>	Mr R Goodliffe
<b>Number 4</b>	Mr B Daniels
<b>Assessor</b>	Mr C High

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# "A Match I'll Never Forget..."

by Pete Anglesea

Sharks 30, Gloucester 30 - April 18th, 2003

On Good Friday, just two years ago, Sharks and Gloucester played out a thrilling drawn game witnessed by Sky Sports' viewers.

The 'Cherry & Whites' had been season-long leaders in the Zurich Premiership, and had captured the Powergen Cup. Sharks, unbeaten at home in the League, trailed the Kingsholm side by eleven points at the start of the game...and after it suffered three successive defeats which saw them slide two places down the table. Being a Bank Holiday, the red-shirted visiting fans had plenty of time to come up the M.5 and M.6, taking up central positions on The Birtles, just under the TV gantry. As referee Tony Spreadbury was poised to blow his whistle for the start, the top of the table looked like this:

	P	W	D	L	F	A	TB	LB	Pts
Gloucester	18	15	1	2	504	312	5	2	69
Sharks	18	12	1	5	481	363	7	1	58
London Wasps	19	11	2	6	482	407	5	4	57
Leicester Tigers	18	11	0	7	389	311	4	2	50

Pete Anglesea (later to receive the 'Man of the Match' accolade) recalls, "It was a boiling hot day. Charlie Hodgson was recovering from the operation which ruled him out of England's World Cup squad, so we had Jos Baxendell at number 10 and on kicking duty. Gloucester's pack had been the main reason for their runaway lead; forwards coach Steve Diamond had worked with us, all week, on attacking their lineout. Chris Jones, in his second season and still something of an unknown quantity, was played at number 8. This allowed Iain Fullarton to come into the second row alongside Dean Schofield.

It was a memorable game: I even put in a couple of kicks! There were plenty of incidents: Ludovic Mercier intercepted a pass on Gloucester's 22 and streaked away to score a try. We responded when good work by Dan Harris enabled me to cross the line for my first competitive try of the season. Soon after, I was able to send Steve Hanley galloping over in the corner. Jason Robinson then showed his dazzling footwork, mesmerising the Gloucester defence as he scored a try. Terry Fanolua pulled one back, then Mark Cueto powered over for our fourth (bonus point) try - the eighth time we'd achieved the feat in nineteen games that season. Gloucester skipper Jake Boer returned from ten minutes in the sin bin to be driven over in the final moments for Gloucester's third try.

We'd probably put so much effort in at the start of the game, that, to be honest, we were hanging on at the end. Gloucester came back well, and 30-all was a fair result. Our dressing room was quiet, and there was a feeling of disappointment there."

Nonetheless, it was great entertainment for the neutral viewer, as well as the fans of both sides. Sharks coach Jim Mallinder was "proud of our performance. The operation to attack their lineout was a massive success." Gloucester's coach Nigel Melville said, "We were massively relieved. The Sharks haven't lost a League game at Heywood Road for eighteen months, and that's why they're second in the League." Dean Ryan added, "Sharks did a great job by moving Jones to number eight, and our lineout was as suspect as it had been when we were knocked out of the Heineken Cup by Munster. We were lacking a calm head out there and are relieved to have come out of it with a draw."

Manchester Evening News Rugby Correspondent Geoff Green reported, "The home forwards were in great form. Jones completely outplayed England hopeful James Forrester in the back row, Anglesea was back at his awesome best, Fullarton cherry-picked at the lineout and Dean Schofield was the physical equal of any Gloucester forward. Andy Titterrell was again a bundle of unbridled energy." Geoff aptly summed up the match thus: "It was a cracking game that was appreciated by the holiday crowd." Gloucester, who had topped the table all year and finished fifteen points clear, had a lengthy wait before losing the 'Champions' title against Wasps at Twickenham. Sharks finished fourth, Northampton Saints sneaking into third, with Tigers sliding to sixth. In fifth place? Leeds Tykes.

#### SCORERS:

##### Sharks:

Tries - Anglesea, Hanley, Robinson, Cueto.

Conversions - Baxendell 2.

Penalties - Baxendell 2.

##### Gloucester:

Tries - Mercier, Fanolua, Boer.

Conversions - Mercier 2, Paul.

Penalties - Mercier 3.

#### TEAMS:

Sharks: Jason Robinson; Mark Cueto, Dan Harris (Vaughan Going 65), Graeme Bond, Steve Hanley (Nick Walshe 80+2); Jos Baxendell, Bryan Redpath (capt.); Kevin Yates (Jim Thorp 62), Andy Titterrell, Barry Stewart (Stuart Turner 62), Dean Schofield, Iain Fullarton, Pete Anglesea, Stuart Pinkerton, Chris Jones.

Gloucester: Thinus Delpoit; Marcel Garvey, Terry Fanolua, Henry Paul, James Simpson-Daniel; Ludovic Mercier, Andy Gomarsall; Trevor Woodman, Olivier Azam (Chris Fortey 56), Andy Deacon, Rob Fidler, Adam Eustace, Jake Boer (capt.), Andy Hazell (Ed Pearce 71), James Forrester (Peter Buxton 62).

Referee: Tony Spreadbury

Attendance: 5678

**TOP:** Mark Cueto and Andy Titterrell tackle Jake Boer

**BOTTOM:** Full House and Sky TV Cameras witnessed a thrilling game

